

Forgiveness of Others and Self-Forgiveness In the Context of Interpersonal Conflict

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By

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Abstract

An integrative model of interpersonal conflict and forgiveness was proposed, and a small number of the relationships within the model were tested. The expectation was that for participants who reported an interpersonal conflict with a family member or friend the interaction of being able to forgive the other in the conflict (other-forgiveness), being able to forgive self in the conflict (self-forgiveness), and intensity of the conflict would predict personal resolution. Results indicated strong relationships between the main effects of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness and personal resolution but no interaction effect. It was also expected that either high levels of other-forgiveness or self-forgiveness alone would predict false forgiveness. This was also not supported. Different post-hoc results were found for both personal resolution and false forgiveness hypotheses based on who the other party to the conflict was (family or friend) and intensity of self or other. The presence of relationships, although not as hypothesized, lent support for leaving all of the tested variables in the model. The need to reframe measures of relevant variables was also expressed.

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INTRODUCTION

Through my work as coordinator of the Conflict Management Team at the University of Saskatchewan I have been struck by the difficulty people have in digging themselves out of interpersonal conflict situations. For many of these people, the past seems to have a strangle hold on the present with little hope that things will get better in the future. They see no way of letting go and moving on. For these people, it seems that interpretations of the other persons' past and present behavior support beliefs about what the conflict is about and who is to blame. In turn these drive current behavior in what seems to be a never-ending cycle (c.f., Ladder of Inference, Argyrus, 1982). Even in the presence of structured processes designed to assist them, people find it difficult to leave the pain, hurt, and investment of time and energy behind.

In searching for answers I reviewed the interpersonal conflict literature. It is clear that this field has provided a significant amount of useful information for researchers and practitioners alike. Included in this information are such things as the behaviors people engage in when they are in conflict with others (e.g., Cahn, 1994; Cupach & Canary, 1997; Hocker & Wilmott, 1991), the prescriptions for alternative behaviors (e.g., Cupach & Canary, 1997; Hocker & Wilmott, 1991), and descriptions of how people make sense of the conflict (e.g., Kelley, 1979; Roloff, 1981; Sillars, 1980). There are also numerous prescriptions for resolving differences (e.g. Deutch, 1973; Fisher & Brown, 1988; Ury, 1993).

What I did not find in this literature is reflection on what individuals need to do to move themselves out of the interpersonal conflict cycle and into a process where the personal pain and injury they have experienced can be addressed and put to rest. Regardless of what happens in the relationship, whether reconciliation occurs or not, something has to happen to break the cyclical processes at the individual level. I have chosen to call this personal resolution.

When looking for answers to this problem I encountered the forgiveness literature. I found it to be very informative although with a slightly different focus. In the forgiveness literature, there is understood to be an injuring party and an injured party. In interpersonal conflict in contrast, the parties are likely both injurers and injured. One article in particular caught my eye (Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1996). It identifies three types of forgiveness and the possible interactions between them: forgiveness of others, self-forgiveness, and accepting forgiveness from others. I posited that two of these concepts, namely self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others (from here on referred to as other-forgiveness) in particular might fill the gap in the interpersonal conflict literature, or at least move the research in a promising direction. In particular I thought that other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness might actually be what is involved in a person attaining personal resolution. What follows are the first steps in the development of an integrative model of interpersonal conflict and forgiveness and the testing of some of the relationships between variables contained therein.

Before outlining the structure of the model, a review of the definitions and processes involved in forgiveness found in the literature is in order. What follows focuses on self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. The exclusion of accepting forgiveness from others from the present endeavor is not a statement of its perceived unimportance in interpersonal conflict but rather speaks to the need to keep the model manageable in its early developmental stages.

Definitions of Other-Forgiveness and Self-Forgiveness

Other-Forgiveness

There are a number of definitions for other-forgiveness in the literature. Some of the more prominent examples follow.

Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996), building on their earlier work (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1991) and on that of North (1987), Cunningham (1985), Smedes (1984), and Augsberger (1981) define forgiveness “as a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, condemnation, and subtle revenge toward an offender who acts unjustly, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love toward him or her” (p.108). They further clarify this definition by stating that:

1. The offended person has suffered an unjust, possibly deep injury at the hands of one person or a group of people. The injury could be psychological, emotional, physical or moral in nature and is experienced as profound, followed closely by shock and disbelief culminating in anger towards the offender.
2. The choice to forgive is made voluntarily and willingly by the offended person. It is not an obligatory process.
3. The new stance the offended person takes includes cognitions, overcoming thoughts of condemnation and replacing them with thoughts of respect, affect, such as overcoming resentment and replacing it with compassion, and behavior, overcoming the proclivity towards acts of revenge with acts of good will.
4. Forgiveness is not reconciliation but primarily one person’s response to another’s action. This means that forgiveness can be given unconditionally regardless of the other person’s current attitude or behavior. There is no need for the two parties to continue a previous relationship.

Other authors define forgiveness in various ways. McCullough, Worthington & Rachal (1997) define forgiveness as a set of motivational changes whereby one becomes (a) decreasingly motivated to retaliate against an offending relationship partner, (b) decreasingly

motivated to maintain estrangement from the offender, and (c) increasingly motivated by conciliation and good will for the offender, despite the hurtful actions of the offender. They see forgiveness as "...the lay concept that people invoke to describe the transformation that occurs when their motivations to seek revenge and to maintain estrangement from an offending relationship partnership diminish, and their motivation to pursue conciliatory actions increases" (p. 322).

More recently, McCullough, Pargament, and Thoresen (2000) have defined forgiveness as "intraindividual, prosocial change toward a perceived transgressor that is situated within a specific interpersonal context" (p. 9). Forgiveness is seen here as having a dual character, being at once interpersonal and intrapersonal. Forgiveness takes place in the mind of the injured party yet occurs as a response to an interpersonal injury.

Hargrave and Sells (1997) define forgiveness as "effort in restoring love and trustworthiness to relationships so that victims and victimizers can put an end to destructive entitlement" (p. 43). This definition does not differentiate between forgiveness and reconciliation.

Flanigan (1992) states that forgiveness is a way in which people in close relationships let each other "off the hook" for committing ruthless or unkind behaviors. "It is the figurative glue that holds together intimate bonds" (p. 2). At the same time it is seen to be elusive as is evidenced by the countless numbers of unforgiven and unforgiving people in the world today. For example one need only look to recent divorce rates.

Veenstra (1992) states that forgiveness is in order when specific actions of one individual against another are injurious, unjust and create a sense of being wronged, offended, or insulted on the part of the other person.

All of these definitions have much in common. Most have at their core releasing the urge to retaliate, and movement towards the re-acceptance of the offender with or without restoration of the relationship. The definitions provided by McCullough and his colleagues (2000, 1997), and Veenstra (1992), are similar to the definition provided by Enright and his colleagues (1996). Hargrave and Sells (1997) definition includes reconciliation as part of the forgiveness process and as such it does not lend itself well to the current study.

Two aspects of the above definitions need to be highlighted here. The first comes from number 4 in the Enright et al. (1996) definition, where the differences between forgiveness and reconciliation are outlined. The idea is that they do not mean the same thing. Forgiveness is an internal process that goes on within the person who has been injured, whereas reconciliation is the process of repairing the relationship breach. One can forgive without reconciling. If this were not the case, it would be impossible for instance to forgive people for deeds they have done if they had since died, or impossible to forgive someone who refuses or sees no need to reconcile. Evidence to support this differentiation can be found in Flanigan (1992) and Safer (1999).

The second piece that is important to note is the dual nature of forgiveness (McCullough, Pargament, and Thoresen, 2000). The injury will likely have occurred as a result of something that took place in the interpersonal space but working through it is an intrapersonal process. This does not mean that outside help cannot assist in the process but that it is something the injured party needs to work through within him or herself.

Self-Forgiveness

Self-forgiveness seems to have garnered significantly less attention in the literature. Enright and his colleagues, following their model of other-forgiveness, define self-forgiveness as

“...a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one’s own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself” (Enright et al., 1996, p. 116). As in the case of other-forgiveness, the self-forgiver has the right to feelings of self-resentment for the behavior(s) involved in the self-offence, but he or she chooses to let go of the self-resentment. In the case of serious, acknowledged wrong doing, the self may not be obligated to be compassionate, generous or loving although self-respect is necessary. “Perhaps self-respect may allow one to see the offence and thus enter a self-forgiveness journey or another journey that leads to healing” (Enright et al., 1996, p. 116).

As with other-forgiveness, Enright and his colleagues understand the self-forgiver to be reacting to an objective wrong. This response is not to a vague uneasiness but to an event or events in one’s life understood to be offensive to self and/or others. “A person with an undifferentiated unspecified feeling of self-resentment may eventually discover an objective wrong, but until he or she does, we believe self-forgiveness to be premature” (Enright et al., 1996, p.116). As in the case of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness can be unconditional, whatever the nature of the original act might be.

Where self-forgiveness differs from other-forgiveness is in the area of reconciliation. Other-forgiveness and reconciling with them are related but distinct processes. Self-forgiveness and reconciliation, on the other hand, are always linked. In self-forgiveness, one not only offers cognitive or affective responses to oneself, but also cares for oneself as a member of the world community. In this self-reconciliation, the self acknowledges that a genuine effort will be made to change in the future. This acknowledgement may also be accompanied by mistrust towards oneself in particular situations, such as the struggle of an alcoholic in the realm of liquor consumption. At the same time, estrangement from self is not part of the picture.

The self-forgiveness process can be distinguished from the more general positive regard of self-esteem and the unnatural, excessive self-focus of narcissism. In contrast to self-esteem, “self forgiveness occurs within a narrowly defined context of broken standards and in a context of negative, not positive, reactions to self. The self-forgiveness process has an outcome similar to self-esteem, but the process itself is not the same as the self-esteem endpoint”(Enright et al., 1996, p.117).

Flanigan (1996) defines self-forgiveness in the following way. First, when self-forgiveness occurs, the person is able to feel that the debt he or she feels is owed to someone is finally paid. Second, in forgiving oneself the urge to self-punish that results from letting one’s flaws or mistakes hurt others is extinguished. Third, a commitment to personal change is necessary. Fourth, when self-forgiveness is completed, an individual’s life space once again feels normal. That is to say that things one believed about self and others make sense, ideas about life are no longer troubling, and one fits more comfortably once again into the big picture.

According to this view, self-forgiveness always has relationships at its core. Self-forgiveness is necessary when relationships have been altered as a result of one’s actions, inaction, words, and possibly thoughts (Flanigan, 1996). Self-forgiveness is not appropriate when aspects of one’s self have caused personal injury only. Self-forgiveness and self-acceptance are seen as different. Self-acceptance has the self as focus with the goal of discovering or creating a better self-concept. Self-forgiveness, on the other hand, focuses on other people, with the goal of transforming oneself into a better person for the sake of others.

Common Objections to Forgiveness

What Forgiveness is Not

One complication that occurs when attempting to understand forgiveness is that pardon, reconciliation, condoning, and excusing are popularly considered synonyms for it (Webster, 1979; Houghton Mifflin, 1982; Merriam-Webster, 2000). According to Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991) forgiveness is none of these. These authors offer further clarification.

Pardon, legal mercy, and leniency. Cases of pardon typically involve an authority overseeing laws by which the degree of punishment is established for each violation. When someone who has broken the law has his or her punishment reduced or suspended there is pardon. The authority who commutes the sentence is rarely the injured party. Forgiveness is not a reduction in punishment but a change in the response of an injured party towards the person who caused the injury (Enright, et al., 1991).

Reconciliation. As can be seen in the above definitions of forgiveness, there are those who understand forgiveness and reconciliation to go hand in hand. Enright and his colleagues understand forgiveness to be an internal release and see reconciliation as relationship repair, two related but distinct processes. There are actually two levels of analysis in play here. Forgiveness takes place at the individual level of analysis; it is a personal process, whereas reconciliation takes place at the interpersonal level of analysis, where the two individuals interact. If this is the case, what might the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation look like? According to Williams (1968) forgiveness may be a necessary condition for reconciliation but it is not the only condition. Smedes (1984) for instance, states that for true reconciliation to occur, trust needs to be rebuilt between the parties to the conflict. My sense is that forgiveness can take

place without reconciliation but reconciliation needs at least some level of forgiveness in order to occur. Ultimately, for reconciliation to occur the parties need to remove the barriers they have put up as a consequence of the felt injustice.

Condoning and excusing. When condoning, the victim chooses to put up with the injustice. In forgiveness, the victim actively seeks to release the perpetrator, to accept him or her despite the moral injury. Smoldering resentment tends to be a product of condoning. This is not the case with forgiveness. Condoning denies resentment whereas forgiveness overcomes it with compassion and love (North, 1987).

Excusing, on the other hand, communicates that the supposedly hurtful event was either not worth addressing or when the circumstances surrounding the incident were understood, that it wasn't really meant to hurt the victim, or lastly that the perpetrator did not have a choice (Veenstra, 1992). Neblett (1974) labels this condoning but it is not insofar as in condoning, the victim acknowledges the infraction whereas in excusing, this acknowledgement is absent and is replaced with an affective neutrality or indifference. Excusing is based on the assumption that the injury inflicted is no injury at all. Forgiveness occurs in the face of acknowledged hurt (Enright, et al., 1991).

Justification. This is the case where the victim sees something just or fair in the infraction committed against him or her. "Rather than betray a secret, suppose Randy stole Fred's car to drive an injured child to hospital. Fred may see the thievery as justified with no need to forgive" (Enright et al., 1991, p. 130). In contrast, forgiveness occurs when there has been a deep, unjust hurt.

Self-centering. The desire to be rid of strong negative emotions is not the only motivation for forgiving another (Richards, 1988). There is also a certain level of willingness to

rejoin in community with the person who perpetrated the injury, but this rejoining comes with the requisite need for a change in the offender's words and actions. "Even when the offender continues unchanged, one who forgives nonetheless waits in the hope of such community" (Enright et al.1991, p. 130).

Other misconceptions. Forgiveness is an active struggle, not a passive act of letting anger diminish over time as Kolnai posits (1973-1974). Forgiveness is not forgetting, since deep offenses are rarely forgotten, nor should they be. "Without remembrance, no wound can be transcended" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 5). Simply offering the words "I forgive you" when underlying anger and resentment still exist is not true forgiveness. At the same time, the recitation of such words need not be required for a victim to forgive, for example, a deceased offender.

That someone has started down the road to forgiveness does not mean that they will reach the end point they are seeking. The process is not self-propelled. Because significant changes in personal beliefs and feelings are a part of the forgiveness process people may quit before they finish. The process has its price, and does not come about in a quiet, passionless way.

Forgiveness is not a mystical process, nor does one necessarily need the help of a higher power. While some people say God helps them forgive, others forgive alone or with the help of friends. Forgiveness is a rational process; it is a conversion in the way you have thought about yourself and other people and about harm and vulnerability. Forgiveness results in a reconceptualization of the way you believe you fit into the larger scheme of things (Flanigan, 1992, p. 72).

Philosophical Objections to Interpersonal Forgiveness

Enright and his colleagues approach the study of forgiveness from a moral development perspective. They have identified and responded to eleven of the more popular arguments against forgiveness.

Forgiveness and weakness. Enright et al. (1991) credit Nietzsche (1887) as the spokesperson for the view that those who forgive are weaklings, unable to assert their rights for a just solution. The work of Trainer (cited in Enright et al., 1991) provides a possible answer to why this view is common. Among the various approaches to forgiveness that Trainer's research identified was one labeled role-expected. In this approach, the "forgiver" perceives a moral or religious imperative to forgive while being unconvinced of the merits of doing so. Unable to retaliate against the offending superior, the "forgiver" grudgingly renounces justice, while harboring resentment and low self-esteem. Enright et al. (1991) posit that this might be what Nietzsche observed and recorded. At the same time, Trainer also discovered an intrinsic approach to forgiveness, characterized by self-acceptance, psychological strength, and respect for the offender, even when faced with anger. This intrinsic forgiver values forgiveness in and of it self. North (1987) lends support for this approach by stating that the forgiving character is only achievable after a hard-fought internal battle that cannot be confused with weakness or timidity.

Forgiveness as a power play. Here forgiveness is seen as putting the "forgiver" in a superior position, providing the opportunity to dominate the forgiven individual (Augsberger, 1981; Cunningham, 1985; Smedes, 1984). In this instance, the "forgiver" may consistently remind the "forgiven" that an obligation exists, that "you owe me one". This is not forgiveness because true forgiveness wipes the slate clean and enables the two people to come together again

as equals. North (1987) acknowledges the moral superiority of the forgiver in this particular instance as the forgiver has engaged in a difficult personal struggle to get to this point. At the same time North (1987) states that if the offender is to be reinstated in his or her original position in the relationship it will likely be accomplished more readily if the injured party ventures some way to meet the offender by lowering him or herself in modesty and humility.

Forgiveness as a reversal of social justice. The argument here is that a forgiving attitude by society would lead to the early parole of criminals who would no doubt re-offend and perpetuate crime. Although this has been debated among philosophers (e.g., Lewis, 1980; Roberts, 1971) the main problem is that there is confusion between forgiveness and legal mercy or pardon. Further, one does not have to choose one or the other, forgiveness and societal justice can coexist. A case in point is that of Pope John Paul II who forgave the man who attempted to assassinate him as he remained incarcerated and faced the judicial process (Morrow, 1984). Enright et al. (1991) go on to state that practicing forgiveness would not keep a person from participating on a jury and bringing required justice to bear. "Forgiveness opens the door for society's receiving back the criminal, but it does not oblige us to hastily open the cell door" (Enright et al, 1991, p. 132).

Forgiveness as a block to personal justice. Given the possible coexistence of forgiveness and societal justice, it is often the case where one's personal sense of justice is set aside in order to forgive another. This is interpreted by some as thwarting justice and as such is seen as immoral (Lauritzen, 1987; Smart, 1968). Roberts (1971) on the other hand, states that in deliberately sacrificing a personal entitlement, as in the case of forgiveness, mercy rather than morality is at issue. Forgiveness is a gift, and giving such a gift can hardly be called immoral. "To forgive is first to be aware of a wrong done, thus placing the forgiver within, not outside, the

moral arena. Further, the intent of a genuine act of forgiveness is to heal and join in loving community, hardly an immoral goal” (Enright et al., p. 132).

Forgiveness as perpetuating injustice. Lauritzen (1987) sheds light on this perspective. If a wife forgives her abusive husband she sets herself up for further abuse in the future. Forgiveness in this case is seen to be immoral. In this situation, forgiveness and reconciliation are understood to be one in the same. That is not necessarily the case. As Enright et al. (1991) state: “forgiveness is an internal release; reconciliation is a behavioral coming together” (p. 132). In the above example the wife could forgive her husband but choose not to reconcile with him until he exhibits a genuine change in his attitude and behavior, which possibly may never happen. Were she to choose not to forgive, she would be left with her own inner hatred which may be as damaging as the physical abuse, and likely longer lasting.

Forgiveness as a logical impossibility. Enright et al. (1991) identify Emanuel Kant as the originator of this perspective. Forgiving someone for an offence would mean wiping out the wrong that they had committed. Because the offence was real and thus impossible to cancel it follows that forgiveness is impossible. Minas (1975) argues similarly in her discussion of deity-to-human forgiveness saying that an omniscient God could not be morally blind. North (1987) clears up this misconception by stating that what is cancelled in forgiveness is not the offence but the distorting effect that this offence had on the relationship between the offender, the victim and possibly others.

Forgiveness as inducing inferiority in others. One possible consequence of forgiveness is that the offender may feel inferior to the victim as a consequence of the victim forswearing retaliation (O’Shaughnessy, 1967). Yet, what of the case where the victim does not communicate his forgiveness to the offender? Communication is not a necessary condition of

forgiveness (Enright et al., 1991). That the offender may misinterpret the victim's motive in forgiving is no reason to forgo forgiveness. The rejection of a gift in no way takes away from the fact that the gift was given.

Forgiveness as inducing inferiority of self. Murphy (1982) asserts that hastening the forgiveness process results in a less than genuine forgiveness and implies a lack of self-respect. Enright et al. (1991) are in agreement with this in that their definition of forgiveness includes a distinct period of anger. Moving to forgive quickly often entails ignoring or skipping over the anger. Enright et al. (1991) seem to be saying that in ignoring anger the victim is not respecting him or herself.

Forgiveness as a lack of respect for others. This also comes from Nietzsche. In showing no resentment towards the offender, the victim is understood to believe that the offender is not worth taking seriously. This unworthy aspect seems to exclude the reaching out in love aspect of forgiveness included in the Enright et al. (1994) definition. In reaching out in love, the victim indicates that the offender has value and is worth taking seriously, personally and in relationship.

Forgiveness as alienation. If one were to follow Berger (1969), forgiveness would be seen to separate us from our true aggressive nature. The natural path would be retaliation. Enright et al. (1991) skirt the scientifically opaque question about human kind's basic nature by citing literature that claims that anger, not forgiveness, can be alienating to self and others (e.g., Brandsma, 1982; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Hunter, 1978). The restoration of positive evaluation and affect toward the other is seen to offer the potential of relationship restoration, not alienation.

Forgiveness as producing hypersensitivity to hurt. Downie (1965) and Droll (cited in Enright et al. 1991) claim that one result of forgiving over time is that the forgiver may become overly sensitive to interpersonal slights. These slights become larger than they are as the

forgiver focuses on them. In response Enright et al. (1991) state that forgiveness entails the honest scrutiny of pain, not a distortion in order to forgive. Further, the sincere practice of forgiveness should lessen such hypersensitivity.

Other-Forgiveness and Self-Forgiveness

In reviewing the other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness literature I discovered significant similarities across the empirical and clinical literature (see Appendix F for the review). What follows is a synthesis of this literature with a focus on the processes outlined by Flanigan (1992, 1996), Enright et al. (1996), and Bauer et al. (1992).

Other-Forgiveness

Looking at the other-forgiveness process as a whole, it seems that there is a difference in how a person moves through the forgiveness process for Enright et al. (1996) and Flanigan (1992). From the perspective of Enright et al. (1996), the process may be linear or non linear, which means that a person in the process of forgiving another may move from one phase to the next, skip phases, and/or cycle back to earlier phases. What is important is that injured parties are moving steadily towards forgiveness as they work through the four different phases. Flanigan (1992) on the other hand, describes the process as "...a progression through a sequence of [6] stages..." (p.11) which I take to mean a linear progression. This difference disappears when one looks at the contents of Flanigan's (1992) approach. Her approach has embedded within it a number of behaviors that will likely slow down or frustrate movement towards forgiveness, behaviors that would be accounted for in the Enright et al. (1996) approach as cycling back.

When comparing the writings of Enright et al. (1996) and Flanigan (1992), I prefer to conceptualize the first step in the forgiveness process as Enright et al. (1996) do, namely, as an

uncovering phase (see Table 1), an appropriate label given the investigative nature of this step. The beginning stage of this step would include such processes as realizing that injury has taken place, assessing the injury and its effects on oneself, and assigning appropriate responsibility where it is due. It is the place in the process of forgiving where one moves from denial to realization, and from realization to the beginnings of action.

Examining the processes in Table 1, this first step would include Enright's (1996) uncovering phase (numbers 1-7) and Flanigan's first four phases of naming the injury, claiming the injury, blaming the injurer, and balancing the scales. Flanigan (1992) sees this process as answering the questions what?, who?, why?, and then moving into action. In this step, one would see such activities as examining the psychological defenses that have been employed in the aftermath, exploring the injury and the changes in one's ideas of vulnerability, control, and justice ("just world"), and coming to terms with, and incorporating permanent personal changes that may have resulted from the injury (Enright et al., 1996; Flanigan, 1992). It is the stage where anger is confronted, shame is admitted if it is part of the aftermath, and clarity regarding responsibility is sought. It is also where one becomes aware of the energy one is consuming in being fixated on the event. Flanigan (1992) also addresses the possible directions a person might take in attempting to balance the scales, such as punishing the injurer or replenishing depleted resources.

One possible negative process here is when an injured person engages in mirroring behaviors, "...an unconscious effort to equalize blame so that compassion for the injurer overtakes hatred for him" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 139). An example of mirroring is adults who were abused as children go on to abuse their own children as adults, a case where no one wins and everyone loses. As Flanigan (1992) states, "even if forgiveness flows from knowing oneself

Table 1
Other-Forgiveness

| Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996) | Flanigan (1992) |
|--|--|
| <p>(Step 1)</p> <p>Uncovering Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examination of psychological defenses 2. Confrontation of anger 3. Admittance of shame 4. Awareness of cathexis 5. Awareness of cognitive rehearsal of offence 6. Insight that injured party may be comparing self with the injurer 7. Realization that oneself may be permanently and adversely changed by the injury 8. Insight into possibly altered "just world" view | <p>(Step 1)</p> <p>Phase 1: Naming the Injury</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admitting the permanency of change 2. Exploring the injury...expose the degree of damage to your ideas of vulnerability, control, and justice 3. Talking...constructing the meaning of the injury <p>Phase 2: Claiming the Injury</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Separation...owning the injury (mine, not ours or yours) 2. Incorporation...done consciously |
| <p>(Step 2)</p> <p>Decision Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. A change of heart, conversion, new insights that old resolution strategies are not working 10. Willingness the consider forgiveness as an option 11. Commitment to forgive the offender <p>Working Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Reframing, through role taking, who the wrongdoer is by reviewing him/her in context 13. Empathy toward the offender 14. Awareness of compassion 15. Acceptance | <p>Phase 3: Blaming the Injurer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Filtering...filtering information regarding who could be guilty and who is guilty 2. Weighing injuries on the responsibility scale 3. Fact-finding...was the injury a part of a pattern of the injurer's behavior (done it before?) <p>Phase 4: Balancing the Scales</p> <p>Possibility 1: consider the injury over and done with and move on to the next phase</p> <p>Possibility 2: Punish the injurer</p> <p>Possibility 3: Loading the scales...replacing depleted resources</p> <p>Possibility 4: Mirroring the injury, or mock punishment (negative behavior)</p> |
| <p>(Step 3)</p> <p>Outcome Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Finding meaning for self and others in the suffering, and in the forgiveness process 17. Realization the self has needed forgiveness from others in the past 18. Insight that one is not alone 19. Realization that self may have a new purpose in life because of the injury 20. Awareness of decreased negative affect and, perhaps, increased positive affect, if this begins to emerge, toward the injurer | <p>(Step 2)</p> <p>Phase 5: Choosing to Forgive</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choosing to expect that no debt be repaid 2. Setting the injurer free 3. Looking ahead <p>(Step 3)</p> <p>Phase 6: Emergence of a New Self</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Realization that harm is an ever present potential |

Note: Similar segments across different descriptions of other-forgiveness are denoted by steps 1 through 3.

as a person capable of hurting others, forgiveness has come with a very high price tag” (p. 139). The work engaged in at this first step is all that which takes place as one approaches the decision whether to forgive or not.

The second step in the forgiveness process revolves around the decision point, and the effects of that decision on how the injurer is perceived. It includes Enright et al.’s (1996) Decision Phase, and Working Phase, and Flanigan’s (1992) Phase 5: Choosing to Forgive. At this point the injured individual has already come to the realization that the old ways of dealing with the injury are no longer working successfully, and that they consume considerable amounts of energy. A change of heart takes place and forgiveness is considered, and eventually a commitment to it is adopted. This step includes such processes as weighing the merits of forgiveness, choosing to expect that no debt be repaid, and committing to forgive the injurer. It also includes changes in how the injurer is seen. There is reframing within a wider context, and a developing awareness of compassion and empathy towards the injurer. There is also acceptance, the absorption of the pain, which is central to the concept of forgiveness. “The offended person soaks up the pain, as a sponge does water, so that he or she does not transfer the pain back to the offender or others. In essence, this unit signifies the gift-like quality of forgiveness as the forgiver stops the cycle of revenge that otherwise may harm the offender and others” (Enright et al., 1996, p. 111). The injured person has set the injurer free and turns his/her attention from the past to the future (Flanigan, 1992).

The final step in the other-forgiveness process is the Outcome Phase for Enright and the Emergence of the New Self (Phase 6) for Flanigan. The decision to forgive has been made and forgiveness has taken place. It is here that some level of meaning is found for the suffering that parties to the conflict have experienced. There is also meaning to be found in the forgiveness

process itself as the forgiver comes to terms with the change in him or herself over time. There is a sense of a larger context at this stage, where people realize they are not alone, that they themselves have needed forgiveness at one time or another, and that a new purpose in life may have resulted from the injury. Flanigan (1992) states, "In the transformation of forgiveness, forgivers construct a new overarching principle about life. The principle, however it is constructed, works to help a person again be able to perceive life as inherently just and fair. The principle resolves incompatibility among beliefs about personal harm" (p.165). The principle is harm is an ever-present potential. Some harm can be controlled and some cannot, and there is acceptance of that reality.

Self-Forgiveness

For the discussion of self-forgiveness, I will be referring to the work of Enright et al. (1996), Flanigan (1996), and Bauer et al. (1992). Like the process of other-forgiveness, there seem to be three steps involved in the process of self-forgiveness (see Table 2). The first of these, Enright et al. (1996) have postulated is a process of uncovering. For Flanigan this would include the phases of confronting yourself and holding yourself responsible. Bauer et al. (1992) call this step forgiveness as issue. In this step there is the realization that something is fundamentally wrong with one's self or one's life, where significant amounts of energy have been and continue to be used feeling guilty, remorseful and/or angry with oneself about past behavior. There may be significant levels of shame. The feeling that others look upon you with condemnation may be present, these feelings may seem to have been growing over time, and they result in the experience of being separated from self and others, an experience that is typically profoundly painful (Bauer et al., 1992). What is important is that one works to understand these feelings.

Table 2
Self-Forgiveness

| Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996) | Flanigan (1992) | Bauer et al. (1992) |
|---|---|--|
| <p>(Step 1) Uncovering Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Denial 2. Guilt and remorse, perhaps self-anger 3. Shame, pervasive sense that others besides myself condemn me 4. Cathexis. Energy consumed as I dwell on 2 & 3 5. Cognitive rehearsal 6. Comparison of myself and another, my more fortunate state to their less fortunate state 7. Realization that the one I hurt (self or other) may be permanently changed 8. Sense of who I am is altered, I am not perfect, perhaps self condemnation, generalized self-criticism, possible lowered self-esteem | <p>(Step 1) Confronting Yourself</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name false limitations and false wrongdoing 2. Identify the sources of mistakes made 3. Understand the fundamental assumptions about yourself that have shattered and will need repair 4. Understand your feelings about the unforgiven incident 5. Understand the barriers you might face when you confront your flaws and failures <p>Holding Yourself Responsible</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify any complications that might make the assignment of responsibility difficult 2. Learn a new way to assign responsibility 3. Uncover your secrets | <p>(Step 1) Forgiveness as Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to avoid sense that something is fundamentally wrong • Sense of brokenness, estrangement from self • Feelings of self-recrimination as offending situation replayed in mind • Intensification of feeling "bad" and/or "wrong" |
| <p>(Step 2) Decision Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Change of heart or conversion 10. Willingness to consider self-forgiveness as an option 11. Commitment to forgive self <p>Work Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Reframing toward the self. Not a shift in blame but seeing the self as imperfect and vulnerable. 13. Affective self-awareness. Being more aware of one's own suffering as a result of one's behavior 14. Compassion 15. Accepting of the pain. Not transferring the pain onto others | <p>(Step 2) Confessing Your Flaws</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize any previous experiences with confessing that may now make confessing difficult 2. Select the right person to whom you will confess 3. Confess | <p>(Step 2) Movement Towards Healing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement from darkness to light, from estrangement to feeling at home • Sense of deep struggle and vacillation between acceptance and harsh judgement • Experience loving acceptance from others • Sense of letting go of old identity and expectations • Honest acknowledgement of one's own responsibility |
| <p>(Step 3) Outcome Phase</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Finding meaning in the event and the suffering 17. Realization that one has forgiven others and received forgiveness in the past; thus one could offer this now to the self 18. Realization that one is not alone. There is social support and others have had to forgive themselves. 19. A new purpose may emerge 20. Release. | <p>(Step 3) Transformation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment to personal change 2. Fundamental assumptions about the world/people rebuilt 3. Self seen as flawed, existing in a flawed world | <p>(Step 3) Transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "At home" with oneself • Shift to meta-perspective—embracing all aspects of the self • Sense of balance and movement |

Note: Similar segments across different descriptions of forgiveness of self are denoted by steps 1 through 3.

What is also key to this step is identifying the sources of the mistakes you have made, and coming to understand that some of your core assumptions about life and people have been challenged or are in the process of being changed (Flanigan, 1996). What a person is doing here is identifying barriers that might inhibit the forgiveness process and taking responsibility for the injurious actions engaged in.

The next step, much like in other-forgiveness, is a decision phase, or a movement towards healing. Both Enright et al. (1996) and Bauer et al. (1992) see the self-forgiveness process as non-linear, that is to say that there is a great deal of struggle and vacillation between acceptance and harsh judgement. That said, there is a point where a change of heart begins, and there is movement towards reframing one's view, namely, understanding oneself to be imperfect and vulnerable.

Bauer et al. (1992) describe self-forgiveness as experiencing loving acceptance towards parts of self found to be disagreeable. For Enright et al. (1996), the crux of the self-forgiveness process is accepting the pain caused by the actual offense or that has emerged over time as a result of the offense. Bauer et al. (1992) refer to experiencing grief and regret over what was and what might have been as one lets go.

One point in the process where the self-forgiveness process differs from the other-forgiveness process has to do with confessing, or talking with someone. For Flanigan, (1996) it is crucial that people make their mistakes known to other people. It is an active process that requires "pain, revelation, courage, and the desire to move forward" (p.120). Bauer et al. (1992) speak of the need for the person seeking self-forgiveness to experience some kind of loving acceptance from others, "especially of those parts of ourselves we find disturbing: our anger, hatred, inadequacy, mistakes, ignorance, hurtfulness, alienation, or irresponsibility" (p. 155).

Enright et al. (1996) include this concept of experiencing some kind of loving acceptance from others in the outcome phase but note that the importance Bauer et al. (1992) place on it indicates that it might fit better earlier on in the process.

The final step is what Enright et al. (1996) call the outcome phase, a phase which Flanigan (1996) and Bauer et al. (1992) refer to as transformation. At this stage “there is a shift in focus to a meta-perspective that can embrace all aspects of one’s self... there is more of a sense of balance and movement. It is not that one never feels bad or wrong, but that these feeling do not pervade the entire fabric of one’s life” (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 158) One can find meaning in the event and suffering, and there is the realization that one is not alone (Enright et al., 1996). There is at once a heightened sense of connectedness with others and the world, and a deepened sense of separateness and individuality (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 159), as one sees oneself as a flawed human in a flawed world (Flanigan, 1996). What is central here is the understanding that people cannot forgive themselves until they commit themselves to personal change (Flanigan, 1996).

An Integrative Model of Interpersonal Conflict and Forgiveness

As I approached the process of integrating the interpersonal conflict and forgiveness literatures, I concluded that the most straightforward and clear way to demonstrate the integration was through model building. In such a model, components and variables could be positioned such that their potential relationships with each other could easily be seen, understood, and tested.

Dimensions and Components of the Model

In the initial stages of model construction my intent is not to be totally inclusive. I assume there will be a need to include variables that others will identify. What I am focusing on

are basic variables in the process of resolving interpersonal conflict that incorporate the concept of forgiveness.

I begin by identifying the dimensions and components of the model (see Figure 1). The model consists of three dimensions. The vertical axis addresses level of analysis, including individual and interpersonal levels. The horizontal axis addresses time or point of influence. The two categories on this axis are processes and outcomes. The third dimension of the model addresses context. This axis also consists of three categories: individual variables, interpersonal variables, and external variables. I first address the variables on the vertical and horizontal axes.

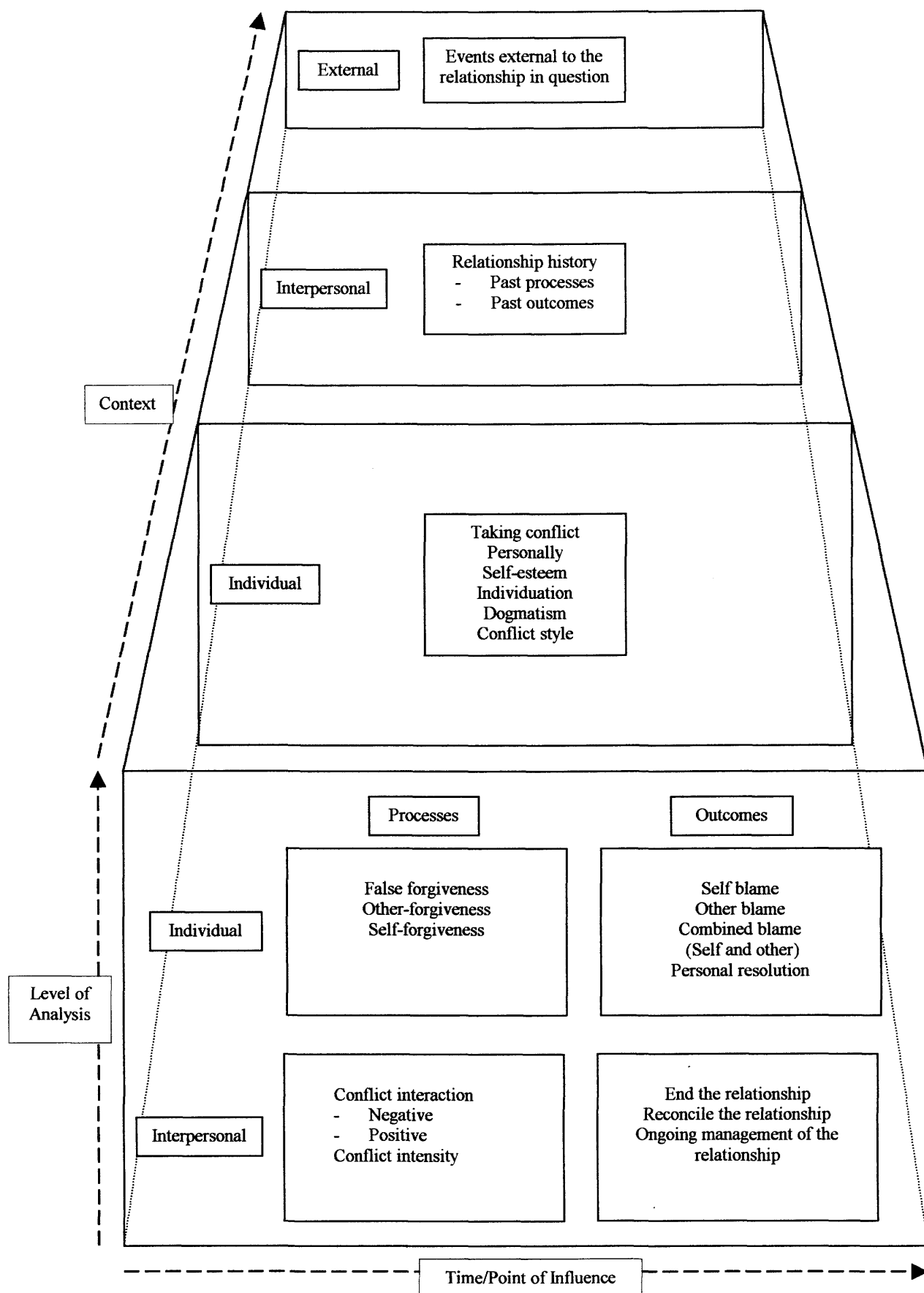
Level of Analysis and Point of Influence

The first two dimensions of the model depict level of analysis (individual and interpersonal) and point of influence (processes and outcomes).

Individual Variables. At the individual level of analysis and processes point of influence, the variables are false forgiveness, other-forgiveness, and self-forgiveness. These three variables address a range of an individual's possible approaches to internally resolving an interpersonal conflict. Each is discussed in turn. False forgiveness consists of primary underlying motives focussed on something other than the eventual release of resentment toward an offender (Augsberger, 1981). It encompasses the false notions of forgiveness based on myths or misunderstandings cited earlier (Enright, et al., 1991). Case (1997) outlines seven types of false forgiveness. They are:

1. Forgiveness dependent on the person to be forgiven. Here the focus is on the belief that one must "earn" the right to be forgiven. Here, forgiveness is something that is engaged in for the sake of others, not for the self.

Figure 1: Integrative Model of Forgiveness and Interpersonal Conflict



2. Forgiveness that puts the forgiver “one-up”. The focus here is on increasing one’s power in a relationship, on appearing more mature, righteous, and/or on increasing one’s chances of winning future disagreements. There is a sense that the injurer now owes the forgiver for the “gift” that has been bestowed.
3. Forgiving which denies or distorts feelings. Avoidance is central here, as the individual does not want to stay in a fight, or sees anger as inappropriate. In this case forgiveness is a quick substitute for hate or anger, which is often expressed at a later time in a less productive and more hurtful way (Augsburger, 1981).
4. Forgiveness seen as condoning or accepting hurtful behaviors. This one is self-explanatory. Forgiveness is understood to mean “what you did to me was okay, I am over it now”
5. Forgiveness based on the belief that to forgive is to forget, or to never again feel sadness or anger in regards to the injurious event. [Note that I stated earlier forgiving is not the same as forgetting (Enright et al., 1991)].
6. Forgiveness that is done without thinking. This type indicates that a decision has been made without engaging in a well thought through process (Augsburger, 1981). It is either spontaneous, done in an insincere way because it is seen to be the right thing to do, or is indicated by the passage of time where no energy is invested in working through the process.
7. Forgiveness that does not take into consideration what is best for the person forgiving regarding his or her relationship with the other. This includes such actions as erecting emotional walls for protection, forgivers not protecting themselves from being hurt in a similar way in the future, and forgiveness that excludes at least some effort to restore relationships (Augsburger, 1981).

Other-forgiveness, as defined earlier, is “a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, condemnation, and subtle revenge toward an offender who acts unjustly, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love toward him or her” (Enright et al., 1991, p.108). Self-forgiveness is the process of being willing “to abandon self-resentment in the face of one’s own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself” (Enright et al., 1996, p. 116). As in the case of other-forgiveness, the self-forgiver has the right to feelings of self-resentment for the behavior(s) involved in the self-offence, but he or she chooses to let go of the self-resentment nonetheless.

Regarding the outcomes point of influence for the individual level of analysis, there are four variables of interest. They are self blame, other blame, combined blame (self and other), and personal resolution. According to Rothman (1997), blame is the first step in an escalating cycle of conflict. Blame results from attributions of responsibility and projections made by individuals in regard to their own actions and the actions of the other party in the conflict. Blame reflects the extent to which individuals see other people or themselves as the cause. The level of responsibility can vary based on a number of factors including the extent to which one feels guilt by association with a negative outcome, the extent to which the outcome was foreseeable, to what extent the outcome was intended, and to what degree the outcome was justifiable (Heider, 1958; Shaver, 1985).

The final individual outcome is personal resolution. It is an outcome for individuals involved in interpersonal conflict who have worked through the issues surrounding and embedded in the conflict. These individuals understand both the part they played as well as the part the other party played in the interaction(s) that resulted in the injury they experienced. They have reached the point where they no longer invest energy in thinking about the conflict and are

not distressed by it. Blame has shifted to responsibility (self and other), and resentment has disappeared. Placing personal resolution as an individual outcome is supported by the forgiveness literature (e.g., Enright et al. 1991; Flanigan, 1994; Worthington, 1998), which emphasizes the internal nature of the forgiveness process, and differentiates this internal process from the ongoing status of the relationship.

Interpersonal Variables. At the interpersonal level of analysis there are two processes variables, namely conflict interaction and conflict intensity. Conflict interaction consists of the behaviors the two conflicting people engage in as a result of their perception of "... incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals" (Hocker, & Wilmot, 1991). As conflict interactions can be destructive (negative) or constructive (positive) in nature, both are discussed in turn.

Destructive conflict interactions are characterized by a tendency to escalate and expand. Escalation consists of an increasing reliance on overt power manipulation, threats, coercion, and deception (Deutsch, 1973). Expansion is more complex:

Expansion occurs along the various dimensions of conflict: the size and number of the immediate issues involved; the number of motives and participants implicated on each side of the issue; the size and number of the principles and precedents that are perceived to be at stake; the costs that the participants are willing to bear in relation to the conflict; the number of norms of moral conduct from which behavior toward the other side is exempted; and the intensity of negative attitudes toward the other side (p. 351).

What truly adds further complexity is when a conflict is or becomes identity based (Rothman, 1997). These types of conflicts "are rooted in the articulation of, and the threats or frustrations to, people's collective need for dignity, recognition, safety, control, purpose, and

efficacy” (p.7). They tend to be convoluted, are intangible, and are often difficult to clearly define because they are based on complex, multidimensional, psychological, historical, and cultural factors (Ibid, 1997). According to Rothman (1997), all identity conflicts contain interest-based or resource-based conflicts, but not all interest or resource-based conflicts contain identity conflict. It is not difficult to imagine a conflict beginning from a basis of incompatible goals or scarce resources developing very quickly into an identity conflict based on the interaction of the parties.

Included are elements Rothman (1997) identifies as central to identity conflicts: attribution, projection, and polarization. Regarding attribution, the styles or tactics individuals use in a conflict interaction are based on “attributions about the partner’s intent to cooperate, the focus of responsibility for the conflict, and the stability of the conflict...” (Sillars, 1980, p. 182). Errors in attribution are common. For instance, people have a strong tendency to explain other’s actions in terms of dispositional rather than situational causes (Baron & Byrne, 1997). When we focus on an individual’s behavior, either the contextual variables fade into the background or we see them but give them significantly less weight (Gilbert & Jones, 1986).

Another way in which attribution can serve to intensify conflict is through the self serving bias, where we attribute our own success to internal causes and our failures to external causes, and do the opposite for people other than ourselves (e.g., Bernstein, Stephan, & Davis, 1979). This reinforces the adversarial approach in interpersonal conflict wherein participants tend to think “I am usually right and you are often wrong” which leads to “if I am right, then you must be to blame”. The attributions we make regarding the actions of others have a significant impact on how we interact with them in the present and the future, and how we interpret past behaviors as well.

Attribution is linked to perception. People's perceptions or misperceptions are key to the attributions they make, and are integral to interpersonal conflict, its escalation, and levels of intensity. According to Realistic Conflict Theory (Sherif, 1966; Sherif, Harvey, Hood, White, & Sherif, 1961; Sherif & Sherif, 1953), whether the conflict individuals believe exists is real or is the result of their attribution processes and misperceptions, these individuals will likely behave in ways that support their beliefs. Whether the hurt was real or the result of misattribution is not addressed in the forgiveness literature. Attribution is an important variable, and needs to be taken into account given the additional perspective it provides, particularly in the case of interpersonal conflict.

The second element Rothman (1997) identifies is projection. It is defined as "the universal psychological defense mechanism that people use to rid themselves of their own 'shadows' such as aggression, egoism, poor judgement, and mistakes" (p.27). The function of projection in interpersonal conflict is to locate these shadow characteristics in the other party, who is seen to be totally separate from the self. Projection serves to keep a distance between self and the other party. "We separate out the consciousness of our likeness to them because acknowledging similarity would also be acknowledging failings, blemishes, and culpability, which feel intolerable" (p. 28). Projection perpetuates blame and negative attributions, and serves to sustain and solidify the conflict.

Polarizing, which is Rothman's (1997) third element, is the "Us against Them mentality that is required for perpetuating blame" (Rothman, 1997, p. 25). To acknowledge that one may be responsible for a part of the conflict is not easy. As such people will often look for ways to avoid doing so. One all too common way is to view the conflict as arising from the injurious, malicious behavior of the other party. "Instead of analyzing their own role in the conflict

escalation, parties circle their wagons and view the other as the front line in a two-tiered attack. Neither stops to inquire into the other's insecurity and injury, hope or fear..." (Ibid, p. 25). Both parties assume this us against them perspective which in turn reinforces it. Polarization is thus seen to be self-fulfilling in nature. This, in brief, concludes the description of the negative conflict interaction.

Positive conflict interaction on the other hand, is characterized by collaborative and integrative behaviors. This cooperative approach views conflict as a shared problem in which the conflicting individuals have a joint interest in finding a mutually satisfactory solution. The idea is that cooperative behaviors work to keep the conflict interaction from escalating or expanding and thus they keep conflict intensity from getting out of hand. For example, recent research by Johnson and Roloff (2000) indicates that for dating university couples, engaging in relationally confirming behaviors during conflict episodes, and making optimistic relational comparisons between episodes, were related positively to perceived resolvability and related negatively to relational harm.

The second primary variable at the interpersonal level of analysis is conflict intensity. Whether a conflict interaction is positive or negative, the level of intensity of the parties in the conflict also has an impact. A number of authors have indicated that a moderate level of intensity is needed to engage in productive conflict management (e.g., Brown, 1983; Hocker & Wilmot, 1991; Walton, 1969). They note that low and high extremes of intensity tend to result in either destructive outcomes or avoidance of the underlying issues. For example, Brown (1983) states that too much intensity "...produces high energy coupled with antagonistic attitudes, restricted and distorted flows of information, low quality decisions based on poor information and one-sided commitments, and continuing tensions that undercut future relations among the parties"

(pp. 7-8). On the other hand, too little intensity "... mobilizes little energy within parties, prevents disagreement and sharing of controversial information, promotes decisions based on inadequate information, perpetuates unchallenged traditions or myths, and generates fragile relations that cannot face the rigors of changing circumstances" (Ibid, p. 8).

Moving to the part of the model that describes interpersonal outcomes, one finds three variables of interest: ending the relationship, reconciling the relationship, and ongoing management of the relationship. Typically, these are the three choices people involved in an interpersonal conflict have in attempting to resolve that conflict. They can choose to end the relationship altogether, severing ties and moving on. This option is often the one of choice where the other party is not interested in, or sees no need to reconcile, and complete separation is possible. Here, personal resolution alone may be the "best" possible outcome. Given that forgiveness processes can take a significant length of time, choosing this path does not necessarily mean that reconciliation is not possible at some point in the distant future, it is just not possible now. In fact, as stated earlier, Augsburger (1981) indicates that refusing to ever be open to reconciliation is indicative of false forgiveness.

A second possible outcome variable is reconciliation with the other party. In order to move in this direction, the parties must have some sense that reconciliation is possible. There needs to be a willingness on the part of both individuals to engage in the process even though the positive end result is not guaranteed. Significant investment in the interpersonal process will likely be needed.

The third possible outcome variable is ongoing management of the relationship. People are in many different relationships, some by choice and others not. Management may be most appropriate for relationships not of our own choosing. People sometimes have to work with

others that they do not get along with. Some people have difficulties getting along with family members. At work or at home, people feel they either do not have a choice about staying in the relationship, or they feel that there is some value in attempting to manage the relationship in an ongoing way. How they choose to interact impacts the ongoing nature of the relationship.

Context

The third dimension of the model is context, which has to do with the bigger picture that surrounds the interpersonal conflict. It consists of three levels of analysis: the individual, the interpersonal, and the external. At the individual level of analysis, one finds the variables that reflect personality characteristics and temperament. These variables provide part of the explanation for an individual's behavior in regard to the conflict.

Two examples are offered. First, people who have high levels of taking conflict personally (TCP) experience conflict as if it was a punishing life event. They tend to feel threatened, anxious, damaged, devalued, and insulted as a result of being involved in conflict. Face becomes an issue that overwhelms the substantive grounds of the conflict. Self-defense becomes paramount, resulting in fight or flight impulses (Dallinger & Hample, 1995). People who score high in TCP tend to avoid conflict whereas those who score low tend to welcome it, and tend to employ argumentative and hostile tactics in relation to it (Dallinger & Hample, 1995).

A second example is self-esteem. People who have higher levels of self-esteem tend to persevere when faced with a difficult task, are more accepting of others, and are less likely to succumb to peer pressure. On the other hand, people with low levels of self esteem experience more anxiety and depression, are more pessimistic about the future, and are more prone to failure (Brown, 1991).

Personality variables are an important inclusion to the model because they have a significant impact on the processes and outcomes at both the individual and interpersonal levels. The list of personality variables identified in the model is by no means complete and is meant to be illustrative only.

The second component in the context dimension is the interpersonal context. It is here that one finds variables that reflect the history of the relationship. Naturally, these variables would include past processes and outcomes at both the individual and interpersonal levels. It includes the thought processes individuals have engaged in, namely, the attributions, projections, and degree to which they have forgiven themselves and others. It also includes how individuals have interacted in conflict in the past, and whether these interactions have been positive or negative. Finally, the degree of polarization that has occurred in previous conflicts, and the outcomes of previous conflicts are also found here.

The third component is the external context which includes all those variables that are external to the relationship yet have impacted it either directly or indirectly in some way. It acknowledges all of the processes and issues beyond the dyad that can impact relationships over time. For example, the behaviors of individuals in the conflict may be influenced or even exacerbated by stress they are experiencing in a different part of their life such as at work or in school, or by a disappointment they have recently experienced. It just may be that the present conflictual interaction started when one party was very tired after a long hard day at work. The key is that this component acknowledges the existence of external forces.

Relationships Between Model Variables

As a first step in testing the relationships among variables in the model, I focus on four variables at the present time, namely, other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, conflict intensity, and

personal resolution. A brief description of current findings in the interpersonal conflict and forgiveness literatures related to these variables follows.

Interpersonal conflict and its intensity. There is a significant amount of existing research on interpersonal conflict, its components, processes and possible outcomes (for a review see Canary, Cupach & Messman, 1995; Cupach, 2000; Holmes & Murray, 1996). The focus of this literature has, for the most part, been on individuals in dating and marital relationships and minimally on relationships between friends (Cupach, 2000). Looking at interpersonal conflict in the organizational literature, one finds a focus on conflict styles (for a review see Rahim, 1997). There is also research on the impact of conflict (negative or positive) on employees (e.g., Aquino, 2000; Greenberg, & Barling, 1999), on work teams (e.g., De Dreu, & Van Vianen, 2001), and on organizations (e.g., Kolb, 1992; Rahim, 1986; Rothman, 1997). The social psychology literature elucidates some of the internal processes parties engage in when reacting to behaviors of others in areas such as attribution, for example (e.g., Fiske & Taylor, 1991). What seems to be missing are the internal processes parties in a conflict need to engage in to move them forward to the place where they can address relationship issues. Explicating these processes will help to facilitate the readiness of people to engage in reconciliation work.

As mentioned earlier, a number of authors have indicated that a moderate level of intensity is needed to engage in productive conflict management or resolution (e.g., Brown, 1983; Hocker & Wilmot, 1991; Walton, 1969). They note that low and high extremes of intensity tend to result in either destructive outcomes or avoidance of the underlying issues. For example, Hocker and Wilmot (1991) state that a moderate level of conflict has the greatest potential for productive management. They identify “unexpressed or unacknowledged conflict” and “unrestrained runaway conflict”, the two extreme ends of the spectrum, as being equally

unproductive. “The unexpressed frustration prevents you from working through the conflict, gives you the entire burden of negative feelings, and precludes the other from joining with you to create solutions to the difficulty. You neither share the pain nor experience the release of pent-up feelings when it might do some good (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991, p. 181).” At the other end of the spectrum “with few restraints on conflict expression, a runaway conflict spiral damages all (Ibid, 1991, p. 182).” A question not addressed in the literature is once destructive outcomes have occurred, what internal processes must the parties go through in order to move themselves to the point where they can address the relationship damage that has occurred?

Other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, false forgiveness, and personal resolution. In the last 15 years or so, much of the forgiveness literature has been theory based (e.g., Bergin, 1988; Veenstra, 1992; Vitz & Mango, 1997) or philosophically based (e.g., Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1994; Holmgren, 1993; North, 1987). Interest in the therapeutic value of forgiveness has also been growing as evidenced by a full volume of the Journal of Family Therapy devoted to it in 1998 (volume 20).

The empirical literature on forgiveness is relatively small but what there is indicates that the impact of other-forgiveness on individuals and relationships in the case of one injured party and one injurer is positive. For example, research indicates that other-forgiveness is related to decreases in the levels of anger, depression, and anxiety people experience (Fitzgibbons, 1986; Subkoviak, et al., 1995). It has also been shown that other-forgiveness increases one’s sense of personal power and self-esteem (Al-Mabuk, Enright, & Cardis, 1995), decreases in feelings of revenge, and increases conciliatory behavior towards the victim (McCullough & Worthington, 1995) (for a review of the literature see Sells & Hargrave, 1998, or McCullough, Exline & Baumeister, 1998).

To date, there is very little research investigating the extent to which other-forgiveness impacts interpersonal conflict, where both parties are potentially causing injury and being injured. A search of the Psycinfo (2002) database in July of 2002 with the key words “interpersonal conflict” and “forgiveness” returned 12 abstracts. Of the 12, only one addressed the personal impact of forgiveness (Estrada-Hollenbeck, 1997). Estrada-Hollenbeck found that forgiveness was primarily a transformative process for the victim, and that it was facilitated in a social context in which the perpetrator provided justice and relationship-enhancing gestures. This fits well within the model that I have proposed. Other research in the area includes the role of mediating factors, such as commitment in motivating forgiveness (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002), the role of discovery methods in relational outcomes of infidelity (Afifi, Felato, & Weiner, 2001), and the role of victim and offender accounts (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002).

As stated earlier there is little existing research on self-forgiveness. What research there is (e.g., Bauer et al., 1992; Flanigan, 1996) focuses on the description of the processes involved. The role that self-forgiveness plays in ongoing relationships remains to be clarified. Evidence from the work of clinicians suggests that there is a relationship between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, particularly in cases where a deep hurt is involved (e.g., Safer, 1999). Some authors claim that the two concepts are not separable (Farrini, 1991; Safer, 1999) in that people need to be able to truly forgive themselves before they will be able to forgive others. To date I have not found any research on the relationship between personal resolution, self-forgiveness, and other-forgiveness, in interpersonal conflict.

There has been little research published regarding the concept of “false forgiveness”. A search of the Psycinfo (2002) database in July of 2002 with the key words false forgiveness and

pseudo-forgiveness revealed only one piece of research, and that was Case (1997). He constructed and tested a false forgiveness scale based on the Enright et al. (1991) explication of what forgiveness is not. At the same time, there seems to be an understanding in the forgiveness literature that false forgiveness inhibits inner change, and that inner change is central to the forgiveness process. For example, Safer (1999) describes false forgiveness as the product of rationalization, lip service, and denial. It is also described as a result of reaction formation or projection (Enright, 1994). What is key is that false forgiveness is described as a ploy to maintain or gain power over others (Enright, Freedman & Rique, 1998) that suggests the continual investment of energy focused on the injury and its aftermath. In forgiveness on the other hand, “we welcome the other into the human community; we see each other as equally worthy of respect” (Enright, Freedman & Rique, 1998, p. 49).

False forgiveness is related to unforgiveness, which according to Worthington (1998) affects passion, commitment, and intimacy. The need for forgiveness, according to Worthington (1998) begins with an injury—the violation of physical, moral, or psychological boundaries. If the injury is not addressed, or if the injurious behavior becomes chronic, the relationship deteriorates. Passion is cooled by injury and intimacy is eroded by the buildup of injuries over time. “Eventually when hurts have accumulated to an intolerable level, commitment ruptures—usually catastrophically and suddenly” (Worthington, 1998, p. 62). Seen in this light, false forgiveness is likely to play a significant role in the deterioration of relationships.

Personal resolution is a novel concept. As such it has not been tested and is the focus of the present endeavor. It is proposed to be the end result of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness processes, negatively related to false forgiveness, and influenced by the level of conflict intensity.

HYPOTHESES

Thus far the concepts of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness have been defined and described, and the Integrative Model of Interpersonal Conflict and Forgiveness has been outlined. Now, particular relationships between the variables of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, personal resolution, and conflict interaction intensity are hypothesized. These variables are depicted on the vertical axes of the model. What follows are hypotheses based on my current understanding of the literature.

Hypothesis one: Intensity of conflict has been shown to be an important variable, and therefore should influence the impact of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness on personal resolution. When conflict intensity is high, the attained level of personal resolution will be predicted by the attained levels of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness together. That is, the attained level of self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone will not be sufficient to predict the level of personal resolution. Operationally, the expectation here was that the three-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) would be significant in a regression analysis.

There are a number of variables that may have an impact on the outcome of hypothesis 1, as well as hypotheses 2 through 6. For instance, there is some question whether hypothesis 1 will hold when conflict intensity is separated into self-intensity and other-intensity. Both parties may behave in a highly intense manner, or it may be that only one party does. This may influence the results. Further, variables such as who the injuring party was (family or friend),

current relationship status (over, worse, same or better) and depth of injury might also have an impact on the testing of the hypotheses. Each of these will be tested in turn following the test of each of the hypotheses, where it is appropriate to do so.

Hypothesis two: When conflict intensity is low, the extent to which parties to interpersonal conflict can attain personal resolution is predicted by the degree to which one can forgive the other for the other's behavior in the conflict.

Operationally, the expectation here was that the two-way interaction (other-forgiveness by conflict intensity) would be significant in a regression analysis.

One of the overarching effects of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness proposed in the forgiveness literature is that these processes will allow the victim to let go of the issue and move on (Bauer et al., 1992; Enright et al., 1996; Flanigan, 1992, 1996). This letting go does not mean that the incident is forgotten. Rather, it recedes into the background as one of the many parts of the individual's makeup. Hypotheses one and two extend this claim to include the level of intensity in interpersonal conflict. If the intensity of an interaction is low, significant personal investment is less likely. Consequently, there is less likely to be negative behavior that one engaged in and therefore less likely a need for self-forgiveness and it is quite likely that avoidance of the issues would occur (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991). Conversely, if interaction intensity is high, both parties will likely engage in negative behaviors. Thus in order to achieve personal resolution, one needs to look at one's own behavior as well as that of the other party.

Hypothesis three: When conflict intensity is high, either high levels of self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone will predict false forgiveness. The expectation here was, with false forgiveness as the dependent variable, that either one or both of the two-way interactions (other-forgiveness by conflict intensity, self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) would be significant in the regression analysis.

Some of the literature suggests that other-forgiveness cannot happen without one previously having forgiven oneself (Ferrini, 1991; Safer, 1999). This is particularly true when the hurt is a deep one. Further, Flanigan (1996) states that the process of forgiving oneself has relationships with others at its core, which suggests that when interpersonal conflict intensity has been high, self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone will not be true forgiveness.

Hypothesis four: The degree to which a person has been able to attain personal resolution will be negatively related to false forgiveness when conflict intensity is high. Operationally, I expected a negative correlation between personal resolution and false forgiveness when looking at the high side of the median split intensity data, but not when looking at the low side.

This prediction follows directly from the first three hypotheses. Further, false forgiveness is seen to be either a ploy to maintain or gain power over others (Enright, Freedman & Rique, 1998), or an avoidance maneuver. Either way, until people are truly able to forgive it is not likely they will be able to let go. It may also be the case that at low levels of intensity people may engage in false forgiveness just to get on with life. Lower level interactions tend to be forgotten over time.

Hypothesis five: At high levels of interaction intensity, other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness together will predict the respondent's relationship satisfaction. That is, either level of self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone will not be sufficient to predict the level of relationship satisfaction. Operationally, my expectation was that using regression analysis, the three-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) would be significant.

Hypothesis six: When interaction intensity is high, false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction will be negatively related. Operationally, looking at the high side of the median split intensity data I expected a negative correlation between false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction.

The closer injured parties are to forgiving themselves for their part in the incident, and the perpetrators for their part in the incident, the more satisfied they would be in the relationship, if that relationship still exists. At lower levels of intensity other variables will likely have more influence on how satisfied individuals are with their relationships. At the same time, when intensity is low false forgiveness may be seen as beneficial to the relationship. When intensity is low, infractions are more likely to be judged as slight in nature, and it may not be considered worth the effort to engage in the forgiveness process. The inclusion of relationship satisfaction in the current study was not meant to bring the wealth of literature in that area to bear on the variables being tested, but to provide an initial sense of what the relationships might look like.

Given the lack of research on the concept of false forgiveness Hypotheses 3 and 5 are by necessity exploratory. The forgiveness literature suggests what the relationships might look like, and it is on that basis that they were tested.

Instrument Development

Before the above hypotheses could be tested, there was a need to develop an instrument to measure self-forgiveness. A search of the literature turned up only one existing self-forgiveness instrument, namely that of Mauger, Freeman, McBride, Perry, Grove, and McKinney (1992). This scale was developed as a part of an inventory to sample behaviors of people who have personality disorders. According to Mauger et al. (1992), the Self-forgiveness Scale items focus on feelings of guilt over past acts, seeing oneself as sinful, and having a variety of negative attitudes toward oneself. Items are clearly self-punitive in their orientation. Mauger et al. (1992) understand the definition of forgiveness to be the opposite of this self-punitive orientation. Given that the present study is interested in participants' experience of a particular hurtful interpersonal conflict and the extent to which they have forgiven themselves for their part in it, the Mauger et al. (1992) scale was clearly not appropriate. The focus in the present research was on a normal population, not on personality disorders. Therefore, a new scale was constructed and tested as a necessary step in testing some of the proposed hypotheses.

In a personal communication, Enright (2000) suggested using the affective and cognitive components of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI) with minor revisions. The revisions were necessary to re-orient the scale items such that they had a personal focus (self-forgiveness) rather than focusing on the other party (other-forgiveness). The resulting two component, 40 item scale, called the EFI – Self was used in the current study (see Appendix A).

The development of a new scale requires research on its structure, reliability and validity. The EFI-Self was subjected to testing using the following rationale. Research by Park (1998) on the original EFI sheds some light on what the factor structure of the new instrument might look like. In comparing data gathered in the U.S.A., Taiwan, and Korea, Park found that a two-factor structure provided the best fit for all four samples, although the item loading was somewhat different across samples. In the first study, the US sample consisted of one factor made up of the cognitive and behavioral subscales items of the EFI and a second factor made up of the affective subscale items. In the second study, the US sample factors changes somewhat. The first factor was made up of the affective and behavioral subscale items and the second factor consisted of the cognitive subscale items. The Korean and Taiwanese data sets consisted of polarized factor solutions, that is, positive forgiveness and negative forgiveness. Given that the behavioral component of the EFI was not used in the EFI-Self scale, I contend that a two-factor solution would also provide the best fit for the EFI-Self scale.

Method

Participants were all students at the University of Saskatchewan. Sixteen percent (38) of the total of 231 participants consisted of a mix of Graduate and Undergraduate students taking courses during the summer. The remainder were members of the regular session Psychology Subject Pool. Participants were asked to describe in detail and answer questions regarding a significant conflict they had experienced in their life with a family member or intimate friend. They were asked to describe the incident, what the other person said or did to them, what they said or did to the other person, how they now felt about the other person and themselves as a result of the conflict, what they thought about the other person and themselves as a result of the conflict, and to outline what effect the conflict has had on the relationship. The intent was to get participants to focus on one particular conflict and to provide detailed data for content analysis. With that situation in mind, participants were then asked to fill out a package of instruments including measures of false forgiveness, the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI), the Conflict Interaction Intensity Instrument (CIII), a revised version of the EFI for measuring self-forgiveness (EFI-S), a series of questions regarding the extent to which they have let the incident go, and a single question regarding their current level of satisfaction in the relationship.

The purpose of including participants' in-depth descriptions of the conflict was to add an additional approach for testing the hypotheses. These in-depth descriptions were classified into stage of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness (pre-uncovering phase, uncovering phase, decision phase, work phase, outcome phase) using the process description outlined by Enright and his colleagues (1996). Given that the forgiveness process is understood not to be necessarily linear, the classification of participants into a particular level of forgiveness does not necessarily indicate how close they are to forgiving themselves or others. It only indicates where they are in

the process at a particular point in time; namely, at the time data was collected. Data was analyzed using hierarchical regression analysis, correlation analysis, and analysis of variance.

One area in need of clarification for the present research is degree of injury. The work to date in the forgiveness literature has addressed injury at various levels. The work of Flanigan (1992, 1996) and Safer (1999) tends toward the highest levels, that is, victims of abuse. Flanigan (1992) for example, actually identifies the type of forgiveness she is addressing as unforgivable, consisting of five major characteristics:

1. Unforgivable injuries start with a singular event that signals a betrayal.
2. They are initiated by intimate injurers, not strangers.
3. They are moral wounds; they shatter a person's concept of morality.
4. They assault a person's most fundamental belief systems.
5. They are deeply personal and therefore relative from wounded person to wounded person (p. 17).

It is difficult to place the research of Enright and his colleagues on a continuum of extent of injury. In their research, participants were asked to think of an event in which they were hurt unfairly and deeply by someone close to them, and to indicate how hurt they were on a five point scale. This question leaves significant room for variability and subjectivity. If one assumes the continuum of injury from "slight" to "extreme" to have a normal distribution, the research of Enright et al. (1996) would likely fall somewhere in the middle of the curve whereas the work of Flanigan (1992, 1996) and Safer (1999) would be to the far right.

In deciding what level of injury should be the focus of this research endeavor, the work of Pruitt, Parker and Mikolic (1997) on the impact of persistent annoyance was helpful. In this study, persistent annoyance was produced by having confederates withhold supplies from

participants who needed them to complete money making projects. Participants were able to talk to the confederate or the experimenter by intercom and statements made by participants on the intercom were content analyzed. Pruitt et al. (1997) found that when confronting another person's persistent annoying behavior, participants tended to enact a verbal escalation sequence that moved in seven steps from requests, demands, complaints, angry statements, threats, and harassment, to verbal abuse. They found that participants began with requests, and over time 92% employed demands, 73% used complaints, 29% used angry statements, and 17% went on to employ threats, harassment, and/or abuse. These findings suggest that people tend to enact assertive behaviors at the beginning of a dispute, and switch to more hostile aggressive behaviors when their early attempts are unsuccessful. Further, earlier research indicated that when a conflict spiral produces this dynamic escalation, both parties tend to see their own behavior as a reaction to persistent annoyance (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). This is also congruent with Deutch's (1973) description of the escalation dynamic.

The Pruitt et al. (1997) study was an experiment conducted with undergraduate women from a psychology participant pool who were unfamiliar with the confederate. I am speculating that the results with individuals who are in a relationship with the annoying person would follow a similar pattern of behaviors to those reacting to "strangers". The percentages may be somewhat different, with more people using complaints, angry statements, and threats. It is at the level of complaints, angry statements, and threats that injury is most likely to occur and as such is the object of this enquiry.

Instruments

Copies of the instruments or example items from them can be seen in Appendix 1.

Other-Forgiveness

The Enright Forgiveness Inventory (Subkoviak et al., 1995) consists of 60 items divided equally between six areas: absence of negative affect, presence of positive affect, absence of negative cognitions, presence of positive cognitions, absence of negative behaviors, and presence of positive behaviors. Coefficient alphas for the affect, cognition and behavior subscales were all found to be .97. The coefficient alpha for the total scale was .98 (Subkoviak, et al., 1995).

Before considering the 60 forgiveness items, each participant is asked on the EFI to think of the most recent experience of someone hurting them deeply and unfairly. They next are asked to report the degree of hurt on a scale of 1 (no hurt) to 5 (a great deal of hurt). They then are asked who hurt them, whether the person is living, how long ago the offence occurred, and then are asked to briefly describe the offense.

Eight additional items are included at the end of the inventory to assess pseudo-forgiveness, including denial and condonation. Finally, the participant is asked to what extent they have forgiven the person they rated on the attitude scale. This is the only mention of the word forgiveness in the EFI.

Self-Forgiveness

There was only one existing instrument designed to measure self-forgiveness found in my search of the literature. It was the Forgiveness of Self Scale developed by Mauger et al. (1992). It was not suited for the current investigation as it addressed self-forgiveness at the trait level, it assessed the extent to which an individual tends to forgive him or herself across a number of different instances, and was not designed for a “normal” population. The interest in the present

study was on state level self-forgiveness, the extent to which an individual is able to forgive him or herself in regards to a specific incident. The present study used the cognitive and affective sections of the EFI with revisions, as suggested by Robert Enright in a personal communication.

Conflict Intensity

The Conflict Interaction Intensity Instrument (CIII, Cooper, 1988) was developed in response to the tendency of researchers to use single-item scales to determine the intensity of the conflict. The CIII consists of two scales, one for participants and one for observers. Given the self-report nature of the current investigations, only the participant scale was used. The participant scale consists of 16 items, eight of which refer to the participant's behavior in the conflict and eight that refer to the other person's behavior in the conflict. The CIII was found to be reliable and valid in its initial design (Cooper, 1988) but has not been widely used in the literature since that time. Factor analysis of the self-report scale items indicated that a one-factor solution provided the best fit and it had a corresponding coefficient alpha of .88 (Cooper, 1988).

False Forgiveness

Case (1997) undertook the preliminary step in creating a measure of false forgiveness. Through an in-depth review of the literature he identified seven types of false forgiveness listed earlier. Once again, they are:

1. Forgiveness dependent on the person to be forgiven
2. Forgiveness that puts the forgiver "one-up".
3. Forgiving which denies or distorts feelings.
4. Forgiveness seen as condoning or accepting hurtful behaviors.
5. Forgiveness based on the belief that to forgive is to forget, or to never again feel sadness or anger in regards to the injurious event.

6. Forgiveness that is done without thinking.
7. Forgiveness that does not take into consideration what is best for the person forgiving regarding his or her relationship with the other.

A total of 38 items designed to measure the seven types were generated and tested (Case, 1997). Factor analysis identified two strong factors. Factor 1 consisted of 15 items and had a coefficient alpha of .89. It consisted of items that indicated attitudes leading to non-forgiveness. Factor 2 consisted of 10 items that were indicative of forgiving for the wrong reasons. This factor had a coefficient alpha of .80. Case proposed that the seven types of false forgiveness might be best represented by these two factors together, which he labeled potential barriers to forgiveness. These 25 items were used to represent false forgiveness in the present study.

Personal Resolution

Participants were asked a series of seven questions regarding the extent to which they have been able to personally resolve the incident. Participants responded to these items on a seven-point scale with one being "not at all" and seven being "a great deal". These seven items were subjected to factor analysis to see if they all belonged in the scale. One item was dropped from the scale as it did not load significantly on any of the factors. The remaining six items that loaded on the two-factor structure, were included in all tests of hypotheses.

Additional Questions

A single question regarding relationship satisfaction was also included. The use of a single item relationship satisfaction measure is somewhat questionable regarding the extent to which it measures the complete construct. It does however carry a significant amount of face validity, that is, "on its face" it seems like a good translation of the construct, and seemed like a reasonable way to gain the information I was attempting to obtain.

Results

Data Screening

The data was screened to check for distribution abnormalities. The data from the in-depth conflict descriptions (from this point forward referred to as the in-depth description data) informed the screening process in two ways. First, it identified a subset of cases where self-forgiveness was for various reasons not needed. For example, there were 15 cases where it was obvious from the participant's responses that they had responded appropriately to the actions of the other party, from my understanding of confrontation processes. They acted assertively, and confronted the other party in a supportive way, and the result was no conflict. These participants had nothing to forgive themselves for. There were 33 other participants who described a situation in which there was clearly one perpetrator and one victim, where both parties were not victimizing each other. Given the present focus on an interactive process, it was deemed appropriate to remove these 48 cases, which resulted in an N of 183.

Second, the in-depth description data was informative for hypotheses 5 and 6 in that it identified cases in which there was no ongoing relationship. This was important information as these two hypotheses deal directly with participants' current level of satisfaction with the relationship. If there is no relationship it is likely safe to say there is significant dissatisfaction with the relationship. As such these participants were not included, which resulted in an N of 118 for these two hypotheses (the relationship satisfaction dataset).

Frequencies and descriptive statistics were compiled on the whole dataset (N = 183) and on the relationship satisfaction subset (N = 118). Descriptive statistics can be seen in Appendix C. The relationship satisfaction variable was kurtotic so it was submitted to a log10 transformation. The resulting transformed variable was used in the analyses. Mahalanobis

distances were calculated to identify potential multivariate outliers. No outliers were identified. Correlations were computed to check for redundant variables, that is, any that had unexpected high correlations. None were found. The correlation matrixes can be seen in Appendix C.

There was some concern in the planning stages of this research regarding to what extent thinking about and responding to the in-depth description and quantitative questions would have a negative impact on the participants. A question was repeated to assess this possibility. The question “On a scale of 1 to 9, one being absolutely calm, feeling no anxiety at all, and 9 being the worst anxiety you can imagine feeling, how do you rate yourself at this moment” was asked following the conflict intensity questions and again at the end of the questionnaire. As can be seen in Table 5, the means of these two items indicate that participants’ feelings of anxiety on average declined slightly over the course of filling out the survey, although this is not a statistically significant difference.

Table 3: How Do You Feel Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|
| How Do You Feel Right Now 1 | 175 | 1.00 | 9.00 | 4.3657 |
| How Do You Feel Right Now 2 | 179 | 1.00 | 9.00 | 3.9665 |

Given these screening results, the focus turned to factor analysis as the next phase of the research.

Factor Analysis

Personal Resolution Scale

The seven items of the scale were submitted to principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation. The decision to favor one solution over another was based on the factor retention criteria by Ford, MacCallum, and Tait (1986), and Zwick and Velicer (1986). These criteria

include: (a) Kaiser's eigenvalue-greater-than-one criteria, (b) Cattell's SCREE test, (c) proportion of variance accounted for, (d) size of the residuals, and (e) psychological meaningfulness.

The initial analysis was run without specifying a particular number of factors. The eigenvalue-greater-than-one criteria indicated two factors whereas plots on Cattell's SCREE test indicated one factor. Inspection of the rotated factor matrix indicated that item 124 "harm is an ever present possibility" did not meet the loading greater than .40 criteria for either factor. This was the only item of the seven that was general in nature. All the others had a specific focus on the self or other.

The analysis was run a second time specifying a two-factor solution with item 124 removed. This time both the eigenvalues-greater-than-one and Cattell's SCREE test indicated a two-factor solution. The items and factor loadings can be seen in Table 4. This solution accounted for 72% of the variance and had a corresponding eigenvalue equal to 1.56. Further, all six items had factor loadings in excess of .40, and the solution perfectly reproduced the original correlation matrix since none of the residuals were significant ($p < .05$). As to psychological meaningfulness, Factor 1 items were all related to impact on self and Factor 2 items were both related to thoughts about the other party.

Table 4: Personal Resolution Items and Factor Loadings

| Items | Factor | |
|--|--------|-----|
| | 1 | 2 |
| 119. The incident continues to distress me | .86 | |
| 118. I continue to think about the incident | .83 | |
| 120. I feel wounded by the incident | .69 | |
| 122. I blame myself for the incident | .40 | |
| 121. I blame the other party for the incident | | .69 |
| 123. I currently resent the person who hurt me | | .68 |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

The one-factor solution was also run but only four items had loadings greater than .40, and this solution did not adequately reproduce the original correlation matrix, since 60% of the residuals were significant ($p < .05$). The factor loadings for the one factor solution can be seen in Appendix D. Based on the five criteria set out above, the two-factor solution provided the best fit. Regarding reliability, coefficient alphas for the two factors were .77 for factor one and .67 for factor two. These were deemed sufficiently adequate for the purposes of the present research.

Self-Forgiveness Scale

The affective and cognitive subscales of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory were revised to shift the focus from other-forgiveness to self-forgiveness (see Appendix 1). For the affective subscale, this meant answering questions such as “I feel negative toward myself” and “I feel kindness towards myself” for example. Participants responded to each question on a six-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The cognitive subscale consisted of two sections. Thirteen items were in the same format as the affective items (e.g., “I think I am wretched”). The remaining seven items were descriptive phrases about the self (e.g., “Regarding myself, I wish myself well”). As with the affective items, participants responded to each question on a six-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The 40 items of the scale were submitted to principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation. Again, the decision to favor one solution over another was based on the factor retention criteria by Ford, MacCallum, and Tait (1986), and Zwick and Velicer (1986) as described above.

The initial analysis was run without specifying a particular number of factors. The eigenvalue-greater-than-one criteria indicated eight factors whereas plots on Cattell’s SCREE

test indicated 3 factors. Given this outcome, and the fact that the EFI was found to have one factor in previous research (Enright, 2001), analyses were run specifying one, two, and three and four factor solutions, each of which can be seen in Appendix D. The one-factor solution was not deemed suitable, as it did not adequately reproduce the original correlation matrix with 66% of the residuals significant ($p < .05$). The two-factor solution was not deemed a good fit as eight of the 36 items were double loaded. Further, this solution also did not adequately reproduce the original correlation matrix since 52% of the residuals were significant ($p < .05$). The psychological meaningfulness of the two factors was also unclear.

The four-factor solution was closest to reproducing the original correlation matrix since only 25% of the residuals were significant ($p < .05$) but was rejected as eigenvalues-greater-than-one suggested eight factors, the SCREE plot suggested three, two items loaded on more than one factor, and only two of the 35 items loaded on the fourth factor.

The three-factor solution was deemed to have the best fit. First, the SCREE plot suggested three factors. Second, it had the most psychological meaningfulness where Factor one contained items assessing positive feelings toward self and Factor two contained items assessing negative feeling towards self. Factor three contained items assessing positive and negative thoughts about self. This solution had only one item that double loaded; item 103 "I think I am dreadful" loaded on both the second and third factors (see Table 5). It is not difficult to see why this was the case as it makes as much sense to say "I feel dreadful" as "I think I am dreadful". This solution accounted for 53.76% of the variance, marginally less than the four-factor solution (58.22 %), and had an eigenvalue equal to 3.004. The three-factor solution did not fully reproduce the original correlation matrix since 34% of the residuals were significant ($p < .05$). Coefficient Alphas provided a test of the reliability of the three factors: Alphas for the

three factors were .96, .92, and .91 respectively. Given these results, the items included in the three-factor solution were used in the testing of the hypotheses in this study.

Table 5: EFI-S 3 Factor Rotated Factor Matrix

| | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| EFIS94 | .830 | | |
| EFIS83 | .819 | | |
| EFIS88 | .810 | | |
| EFIS81 | .805 | | |
| EFIS95 | .790 | | |
| EFIS80 | .779 | | |
| EFIS78 | .774 | | |
| EFIS96 | .763 | | |
| EFIS84 | .754 | | |
| EFIS92 | .723 | | |
| EFIS117 | | | |
| EFIS116 | | | |
| EFIS97 | | .738 | |
| EFIS93 | | .719 | |
| EFIS89 | | .695 | |
| EFIS90 | | .642 | |
| EFIS91 | | .640 | |
| EFIS86 | | .630 | |
| EFIS87 | | .621 | |
| EFIS82 | | .609 | |
| EFIS85 | | .590 | |
| EFIS79 | | .581 | |
| EFIS105 | | .532 | |
| EFIS98 | | .443 | |
| EFIS99 | | .428 | |
| EFIS113 | | .407 | |
| EFIS102 | | | .778 |
| EFIS111 | | | .757 |
| EFIS108 | | | .708 |
| EFIS100 | | | .699 |
| EFIS110 | | | .690 |
| EFIS107 | | | .655 |
| EFIS103 | | .438 | .652 |
| EFIS104 | | | .639 |
| EFIS106 | | | .561 |
| EFIS101 | | | .547 |
| EFIS115 | | | .470 |
| EFIS109 | | | .458 |
| EFIS112 | | | |
| EFIS114 | | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (Personal Resolution with High Levels of Conflict Intensity)

This hypothesis stated that other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness together would predict personal resolution when conflict intensity was high. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to test this hypothesis with personal resolution as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables. The independent variables were centered by subtracting the raw scores from the mean of that score to minimize the potential of multicollinearity. Note that when variables are centered, the correlation coefficient sign changes. The centered variables were entered into the analysis in three blocks: main effects first, two-way interactions second and the 3-way interaction last. It was expected that the 3-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) would be significant. This hypothesis was not supported (see Table 6). The only significant predictors of personal resolution were the other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness main effects. As other-forgiveness increased by one unit, personal resolution increased by .41 units and as self-forgiveness increased by 1 unit, personal resolution increased by .20 units.

In-depth description analysis. The in-depth description data was utilized as an additional method of testing the hypothesis. My review of the forgiveness literature identified three general stages or steps in the other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness processes (see Table 1 and Table 2). An initial reading of the written descriptions provided by participants identified a need for more than three stages. What became clear was that the four steps outlined by Enright et al. (1996, see Table 1) for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were a close fit and needed only one additional step. The additional step was identified as a pre-uncovering phase where the

Table 6

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.57E-02 | -.41** | .19 | -.43 ^a |
| Self-Forgiveness | 4.57E-02 | -.20** | .04 | -.28 |
| Constant | 37.64 | | | |
| | | Total | .23 | |
| F = 15.57, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

^aThe use of centered variables resulted in correlation coefficient sign changes.

**p < .01

individual does not mention the need to forgive self or other. The other party is seen to be completely at fault and there is no acknowledgement of the amount of energy being consumed by focusing on the incident. There is little or no awareness, realization, or insight associated with the incident. Enright et al. (1996) see the awareness of denial as a part of the Uncovering Phase (Step 1). As such it makes sense to include denial in the pre-uncovering stage.

In creating the other-forgiveness coding scheme, I used Flanigan's (1992) work to further elaborate the five steps. With the self-forgiveness coding scheme, the Flanigan (1996) and Bauer et al. (1992) descriptions were incorporated where they informed the process. The two resultant schemes can be seen in Appendix E.

Coding reliability was tested with the assistance of a fellow graduate student.

Coefficient Kappas were tabulated for a portion of the data coded with the two coding schemes. Coefficient K, as a conservative indicator of interrater agreement, yields proportion of agreement after agreement by chance has been removed. The Graduate student and I coded a total of 75

participant responses resulting in Kappas of .90 for other-forgiveness, and .94 for self-forgiveness. These Kappas were considered sufficient agreement for me to proceed with coding independently.

In looking at the distribution of coded responses for self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, it was clear that they were not linear. The majority of responses for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were either at the lower end (coded 1 or 2) or at the upper end (coded 5). The number of respondents who were in the midst of deciding to forgive him or herself or the other person (coded 4 or 5) was relatively low. As a result, these two variables were recoded into dichotomous variables with forgiveness not considered (codes 1 and 2) and forgiveness considered (codes 3 – 5) as possible responses.

To test the possibility of a three-way interaction between other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity, a 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance was run with personal resolution as the dependent variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and conflict intensity as the independent variables. Conflict intensity was dichotomized using a median split. Table 7 shows that only the main effect for other-forgiveness was significant. As can be seen in Table 8, participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness.

Further Analysis of Hypothesis 1

As stated earlier, there are a number of variables that may have an impact on the outcome of Hypothesis 1. Further analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, age, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better).

Table 7

Analysis of Variance: Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 26.53** |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .60 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .26 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .58 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .06 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .17 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | 1.60 |
| Error | 157 | (34.62) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

**p < .01

Table 8

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 18.03 (108) | 23.63 (57) |

Note: levels of personal resolution are significantly different at $p < .01$. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of personal resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

The conflict intensity measure consisted of two sets of questions of equal number, one oriented towards ones' own behavior in the conflict (self-intensity) and the other towards the behavior of the other party to the conflict (other-intensity). It is possible that the combined conflict intensity measure masked subscale differences. The Hypothesis 1 regression analysis

was repeated with each of these subscales. No masking effects were found as the results replicated those with the combined (other and self) intensity scale (See Table 9 and Table 10).

Table 9

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -3.54E-02 | -.41** | .19 | -.44 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -4.75-02 | -.21** | .04 | -.27 |
| Constant | 21.88 | | | |
| | | Total | .23 | |
| F = 15.76, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, OI = Other-Intensity.

**p < .01

Perhaps there were differences in ages of participants that masked the effect for one age group. Hypothesis 1 was also tested selecting only those participants whose age was less than 36. This was done to test whether the inclusion of the few participants who were older would change the results. Looking at the distribution revealed that there was a break in age at the 36-year mark with 12 participants being older than 40 and the rest 36 and under. As can be seen in Table 11, there was no change in the results when the 12 older participants were excluded from the analysis.

It is possible that the effects of the forgiveness and intensity variables on personal resolution were masked by combining who the other party to the conflict was (family and friend). To test this possibility the data was analyzed based on responses to the question “who hurt you?”. The responses were recoded into family (son, daughter, sister, brother, spouse,

Table 10

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.52E-02 | .40** | .19 | -.43 |
| Self-Forgiveness | 4.61E-02 | .23** | .04 | -.29 |
| Constant | 21.89 | | | |
| | | Total | .23 | |
| F = 15.86, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, SI = Self-Intensity.

**p < .01

Table 11

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block (Age ≤ 36)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -3.84E-02 | -.42** | .20 | -.44 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -4.14E02 | -.20* | .04 | -.28 |
| Constant | 38.76 | | | |
| | | Total | .24 | |
| F = 12.74, P < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

**p < .01

parent) or friend (friend of same gender, friend of opposite gender). One might question the inclusion of spouse in the “family” category but there were too few responses in some of the categories to break down the distribution further.

In the case of friends as the other party to the conflict, results of the regression analysis indicated that there was no difference from the overall test of Hypothesis 1. That is, only the main effects of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness significantly predicted personal resolution (see Table 12). It is possible that the combined intensity (other and self) variable masked intensity subscale differences in the case of friends as the other party. Two regression analyses were conducted to test this notion with personal resolution as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other intensity as predictor variables in the first analysis and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and self-intensity as predictors in the second analysis. No differences from the combined intensity analysis were found.

Table 12

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -3.34E-02 | -.40** | .20 | -.45 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -5.32E-02 | -.24* | .07 | -.32 |
| Constant | 38.32 | | | |
| | | Total | .27 | |
| F = 9.28, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

**p < .01

In the case of “who hurt you - family” the results were somewhat different. In this case, it was other-forgiveness and the self-forgiveness by conflict intensity interaction that significantly predicted personal resolution. Two further regression analyses were undertaken, one with self-intensity and one with other-intensity to test if the two-way (self-forgiveness x conflict intensity) interaction would be significant in each case. The interaction was only

significant in the other intensity results (see Table 13). With self-intensity, the other-forgiveness main effect was the only significant predictor of personal resolution.

Table 13

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -4.80E-02 | -.51** | .19 | -.46 |
| SF x OI | -6.55E.03 | -.28* | .08 | -.25 |
| Constant | 33.33 | | | |
| | | Total | .35 | |

F = 7.76, p < .01

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, OI = Other-Intensity.

*p < .05

**p < .01

Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to examine the cell mean differences of the self-forgiveness by other-intensity interaction. Results of the simple effects analyses comparing mean levels of self-forgiveness when selecting for low and high levels of other-intensity were not significant F = .58, ns, and F = 1.35, ns respectively. Cell means can be seen in Table 14. It is possible that the 2-way interaction was an artifact given that the number of participants per cell was as low as 11 and only as high as 19. Some masking effects were found in the further analysis of Hypothesis 1 but support for the hypothesis was not found.

Table 14
Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Self-Forgiveness and Other-Intensity (Who Hurt you – Family)

| | Low Other-Intensity | High Other-Intensity |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Low Self-Forgiveness | 20.56 (38) | 18.74 (40) |
| High Self-Forgiveness | 22.46 (44) | 21.05 (42) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n’s are in parentheses.

Further analyses were conducted to test the possibility that combined relationship status (over, worse, same, better) masked the results of Hypothesis 1. The in-depth description data provided a measure of relationship status. Participants’ responses to the question “what affect has the conflict had on the relationship?” were coded into one of four relationship states: the relationship is over, worse, the same, or better. The last two states (the same and better) were combined for the analysis due to the lower number of participants reporting these relationship states. Coding reliability was tested with the assistance of a fellow Graduate student utilizing 75 participant responses. A coefficient Kappa of .94 was achieved and was considered sufficient agreement for me to proceed with coding independently.

Hypothesis 1 was retested selecting for each of the three relationship states utilizing a regression analysis with personal resolution as the criterion variable, and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables. Results for participants who reported their relationship to be over replicated the overall findings for Hypothesis 1 in which the main effects for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness predicted personal resolution (see Table 15). To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported

their relationship to be over, two regression analyses were conducted. Results of both analyses mirrored the results of the combined (other and self) intensity analysis.

Table 15
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Over)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -4.25E-02 | -.43** | .17 | -.41 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -9.00E-02 | -.39** | .14 | -.35 |
| Constant | 45.34 | | | |
| | | Total | .31 | |
| F = 7.19, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.
 *p < .05
 **p < .01

In the results of the regression analysis for participants who reported the relationship was worse after the conflict, none of the predictors were significant, F (1, 55) = 1.82, ns. To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported their relationship to be worse, two regression analyses were conducted. Results of both analyses mirrored the results of the combined (other and self) intensity analysis.

For participants who reported the relationship to be the same or better, results of the regression analysis indicated that only the main effect of other-forgiveness significantly predicted personal resolution (see Table 16). To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better, two regression analyses were conducted. No differences from the combined (other and self) intensity analysis

were found. Selecting for each of the three relationship states identified some masking effects but none that lent support to Hypothesis 1.

Table 16
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Third Block (Relationship Status - Same or Better)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -6.87E-02 | -.56** | .25 | -.50 |
| Constant | 37.81 | | | |
| | | Total | .28 | |
| F = 8.77, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.
 **p < .01

A series of one-way analyses of variance were conducted to examine the relationship between personal resolution, relationship status, time since the incident, and depth of injury. It was felt that the results of these analyses would lend further understanding to the overall relationship between personal resolution and the forgiveness variables. A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to examine the impact of relationship status (over, worse, same or better) on level of personal resolution. The results were significant (see Table 17).

Table 17
Analysis of Variance: Current Relationship Status on Personal Resolution

| Source | DF | F |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|
| Current Relationship Status | 2 | 12.11** |
| Mean Square Error | 179 | (34.75) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses denote mean square error.
 **p < .01

A comparison of the three levels of means indicated that participants who reported their relationship to be over or worse reported significantly lower levels of personal resolution than those who reported their relationship state to be the same or better (See Table 18).

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to examine the relationship between relationship status (over, worse, same or better) and time since the incident. Again, significant differences were found (see Table 19).

Table 18
Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Current Relationship Status

| Relationship Over | Relationship Worse | Relationship Same/Better |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 23.02 _a (65) | 23.70 _a (63) | 18.69 _b (54) |

Note: levels of personal resolution with different subscripts are significantly different at $p < .01$. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating lower levels of personal resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 19
Analysis of Variance Time Since Incident by Current Relationship Status

| Source | DF | F |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------|
| Current Relationship Status | 2 | 4.38* |
| Mean Square Error | 179 | (537.26) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses denote mean square error.

* $p < .05$

A comparison of the three levels of means indicated that significantly more time had passed since the occurrence of the incident for participants who reported their relationship to be over than for those who reported the relationship to be worse or the same/better (see Table 20).

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to examine the relationship between relationship status (over, worse, same or better) and depth of injury (how deeply where you hurt). Again significant differences were found (see Table 21).

Table 20
Mean Levels of Time Since Incident in Months by Current Relationship Status

| Relationship Over | Relationship Worse | Relationship Same/Better |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 19.54 _a (65) | 9.18 _b (64) | 8.64 _b (53) |

Note: levels of time since incident with different subscripts are significantly different at $p < .05$. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from .01 month to 216.00 months. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 21
Analysis of Variance: Depth of Experienced Injury by Current Relationship Status

| Source | DF | F |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------|
| Current Relationship Status | 2 | 4.10* |
| Mean Square Error | 180 | (.95) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses denote mean square error.

* $p < .05$

A comparison of the three levels of means indicated that significantly more injury had been experienced by participants who reported their relationship to be over or worse than for those who reported the relationship to be the same or better (see Table 22).

Table 22
Mean Levels of Depth of Experienced Injury by Current Relationship Status

| Relationship Over | Relationship Worse | Relationship Same/Better |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 4.25 _a (65) | 4.28 _a (64) | 3.82 _b (54) |

Note: levels of depth of injury with different subscripts are significantly different at $p < .05$. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from 1 to 6. Cell n's are in parentheses.

In-Depth Description Further Analysis

As stated earlier, there are a number of variables that may have an impact on the outcome of Hypothesis 1. Further analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better).

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the in-depth description analysis of Hypothesis 1 was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. The results of both analyses mirrored those of combined intensity (other and self together). The main effect of other-forgiveness was significant for both other-intensity and self-intensity analyses, $F_s(1, 157) = 28.36$ and 24.90 respectively, $p_s < .01$. The means can be seen in Tables 23 and 24. In both cases, participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness also reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness.

Table 23

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data, Other-Intensity)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 18.09 _a (108) | 23.71 _b (57) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 24

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data, Self-Intensity)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 18.27 _a (109) | 23.67 _b (58) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

The possibility that the combined who hurt you (family or friend) variable masked results of the in-depth description Hypothesis 1 analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were run to test this possibility. The results of both analyses replicated those of the combined who hurt you – family and friend analysis where the other-forgiveness main effect was significant, $F(1, 58) = 10.84$, for family, and $F(1, 71) = 18.06$ for friend, $ps < .01$. The means can be seen in Tables 25 and 26. In both cases, participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness also reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness. No masking effects were found.

Table 25

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data, Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 18.49 _a (34) | 24.22 _b (41) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 26

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data, who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 17.59 _a (44) | 23.70 _b (42) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

It is possible that the total conflict intensity (other and self) measure masked subscale differences with the who hurt you – friend and who hurt you – family analyses. To test this notion, four separate 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (other-intensity/self-intensity) analyses of variance were conducted. No masking effects were present as no differences from the combined (other and self together) intensity analysis were found.

Further analyses were conducted to test the possibility whether combined relationship status (over, worse, same/better) masked the results of Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 was retested selecting for each of the three relationship states. Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be over was not significant (see Table 27).

It is possible that the total conflict intensity (other and self together) measure masked intensity subscale differences with the relationship status – over analysis. Two separate 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (other-intensity/self-intensity) analyses of variance were conducted to test this notion. No differences from the combined intensity analysis were found.

Table 27

Analysis of Variance: Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status - Over)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|---------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 3.04 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .19 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .50 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .00 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .25 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .26 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .57 |
| Error | 47 | (34.38) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be worse were not significant (see Table 28). It is possible that the total conflict intensity (other and self together) measure masked intensity subscale differences with the relationship status – worse analysis. Thus, two separate 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (other-intensity/self-intensity) analyses of variance were conducted to test this notion. No differences from the combined intensity analysis were found.

Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better indicated that the other-forgiveness main effect was significant $F(1, 42) = 4.69$. $p < .05$. Mean levels of other-forgiveness can be seen in Table 29.

Table 28

Analysis of Variance: Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status – Worse)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|---------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 1.58 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .03 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .45 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .78 |
| OF x CI | 1 | 2.72 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .19 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | 3.10 |
| Error | 51 | (26.37) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

Table 29

Mean Levels of Personal Resolution by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status – Same or Better)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 16.32 _a (13) | 22.86 _b (40) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 6 to 36 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Personal Resolution. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness also reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness. It is possible that the total conflict intensity (self and other together) measure masked intensity subscale differences in this analysis. Two separate 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x

2 (other-intensity/self-intensity) analyses of variance were conducted to test this notion. No differences from the combined intensity analysis were found. Some masking effects were found with the additional analysis of the data, but the results did not support hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 (Low Intensity of Conflict)

Hypothesis 2 stated that when conflict intensity was low, personal resolution would be predicted by the degree to which one can forgive the other (other-forgiveness) for the other's behavior in the conflict. An interaction between other-forgiveness and conflict intensity was expected to predict personal resolution. Results of a regression analysis with personal resolution as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables indicated that this was not the case. As was indicated in Hypothesis 1, only the main effects for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness significantly predicted personal resolution (see Table 30). Note again that the change in correlation sign is due to the use of centered variables.

Table 30

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Personal Resolution at the Second Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -3.47E-02 | -.40** | .19 | -.44 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -4.68E-02 | -.22** | .04 | -.26 |
| Constant | 38.69 | | | |
| | | Total | .23 | |
| F = 23.50, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign
 **p < .01

Hypothesis 2 In-Depth Description

To test the possibility of a two-way interaction between the in-depth other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness variables, a 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance was run with personal resolution as the dependent variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and conflict intensity as the IVs. None of the 2 by 2 interactions reached significance, while the main effect for other-forgiveness did, $F(1, 157) = 26.53, p < .01$. Again, mean levels of other-forgiveness can be seen in Table 29. Participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness also reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness. The in-depth description data did not support Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 (False Forgiveness)

Hypothesis 3 stated that high levels of conflict intensity combined with high levels of self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone would predict false forgiveness. Significant 2-way interactions (other-forgiveness by conflict intensity and self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) were expected. Results of the regression analysis with false forgiveness as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables did not support the hypothesis. The only variable to significantly predict false forgiveness was the other-forgiveness main effect (see Table 31).

In-Depth Description Analysis

A 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance was computed on the in-depth description data with false forgiveness as the dependant variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the independent variables. Other forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity were dichotomized into high and low

by the median split method. Results indicated that only the main effect for other-forgiveness was significant (see Table 32).

Table 31
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on False Forgiveness at the Second Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.04E-02 | .17* | .03 | .17 |
| Constant | 80.24 | | | |
| | | Total | .04 | |
| F = 4.64, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

Table 32
Analysis of Variance False Forgiveness By Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data)

| Source | DF | F |
|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 1 | 5.61* |
| Self-Forgiveness | 1 | .10 |
| Conflict Intensity | 1 | .24 |
| OF x SF | 1 | 1.73 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .12 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .28 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .29 |
| Mean Square Error | 172.52 | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

**p < .01

As can be seen from the means in Table 33, participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness had significantly lower false forgiveness scores than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness, a result in the expected direction.

Table 33

Mean Levels of False Forgiveness by Other-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| False Forgiveness | 82.58 _a (118) | 76.76 _b (59) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 25 to 150 with higher scores indicating higher levels of False Forgiveness. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Further Analysis of Hypothesis 3

There are a number of variables that may have masked the outcome of the testing of hypothesis 3. Further regression analyses with false forgiveness as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity (self and/or other) as the predictor variables were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better). It is also possible that a 3-way (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) interaction predicted false forgiveness and therefore all additional regression analyses of Hypothesis 3 were run with the third block (3-way interaction) included.

It is possible that the total conflict intensity measure masked subscale differences. Two separate regression analyses were run with self-intensity and other-intensity. The self-intensity results replicated the overall analysis (see Table 34) with other forgiveness significantly predicting false forgiveness whereas with the other-intensity analysis, self-forgiveness

significantly predicted false forgiveness (see Table 35). Neither analysis showed support for Hypothesis 3.

Table 34
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on False Forgiveness at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.22E-02 | .18* | .03 | .18 |
| Constant | 80.06 | | | |
| | | Total | .03 | |
| F = 5.24, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.
*p < .05

Table 35
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on False Forgiveness at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Self-Forgiveness | 8.55E-02 | .18* | .03 | .18 |
| Constant | 80.00 | | | |
| | | Total | .03 | |
| F = 5.32, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.
*p < .05

It is possible that the effects of the forgiveness and intensity variables on personal resolution were masked by combining who the other party to the conflict was (family and friend). To test this possibility, the data was analyzed based on responses to the question “who

hurt you". Results of the who hurt you—family regression analysis were not significant, $F(1, 64) = 2.971$, ns. Results of the who hurt you—friend analysis indicated that the main effects for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were significant (see Table 36). The correlations

Table 36

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on False Forgiveness on the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|---------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 4.89E-02 | .31** | .12 | .34 |
| Self-Forgiveness | .10 | .24* | .05 | .24 |
| Constant | 82.04 | | | |
| | | Total | .17 | |
| $F = 5.14, p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

indicated that increases in both other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were associated with decreases in false forgiveness. No support for Hypothesis 3 was shown.

Further analyses were conducted to test the possibility of whether combined relationship status (over, worse, same/better) masked the results of the test of Hypothesis 3. Results of the regression analyses were not significant for participants who reported their relationship to be over, worse, or the same/better, $F(1, 49) = .40$, $F(1, 53) = 3.30$, $F(1, 48) = 1.77$ respectively, ns.

The scale used to measure false forgiveness was the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness Scale (Case, 1997), made up of two subscales: the Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness Scale (ALNOF), and the False Forgiveness Scale (FFS). It is possible that the two subscales combined masked results supportive of Hypothesis 3. Separate regression analyses were conducted with

each of these subscales to test this notion. Further regression analyses with ALNOF or FFS as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity (self and/or other) as the predictor variables were also conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family or friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better).

Results of the regression analysis for the ALNOF scale, with ALNOF as the criterion and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables, indicated that the other-forgiveness main effect was significant and that the 3-way interaction between other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity was significant (see Table 37).

Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity). Results indicated that participants who reported high conflict intensity, low other-forgiveness and high self-forgiveness scored significantly higher on ALNOF than did participants who reported high levels of conflict intensity, other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness (see Table 38). This result did not support Hypothesis 3, as the expected 2-way interactions (other-forgiveness by conflict intensity and self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) did not materialize.

It is possible that the combined (self and other) conflict intensity measure masked intensity subscale differences in the above analysis. The regression analysis was conducted again twice with the intensity variable divided into other-intensity and self-intensity. This resulted in only the main effect of the other-forgiveness predictor variable reaching significance in both cases (see Table 39 and 40). Thus, no support for Hypothesis 3 was found.

Table 37
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on the Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness Subscale (ALNOF) at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 5.28E-02 | .30** | .11 | .33 |
| OF x SF x CI | 6.35-E05 | .16* | .03 | .22 |
| Constant | 46.57 | | | |
| Total | | | .14 | |
| F = 12.22, P < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 38
Mean Levels of ALNOF by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Conflict Intensity

| | Low Conflict Intensity | | High Conflict Intensity | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 51.32 (22) | 45.15 (20) | 48.19 (21) | 52.40 _a (15) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 47.47 (15) | 45.57 (21) | 43.89 (18) | 40.59 _b (27) |

Note: levels of ALNOF with different subscripts are significantly different at p < .01. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Scale scores range from 15 to 90 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 39

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 5.57E-02 | .32** | .11 | .33 |
| Constant | 46.39 | | | |
| | | Total | .11 | |
| F = 18.64, P < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

**p < .01

Table 40

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 5.41E-02 | .31** | .12 | .34 |
| Constant | 46.63 | | | |
| | | Total | .12 | |
| F = 21.36, P < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

**p < .01

It is possible that the effects of the forgiveness and intensity variables on ALNOF were masked by combining who the other party to the conflict was (family and friend). To test this possibility,

the data was reanalyzed based on responses to the question “who hurt you?”. Results of the regression analysis with ALNOF as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables, selecting for participants who had been hurt by a family member, indicated that the 3-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) was significant (see Table 41). Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to examine the cell mean differences in the interaction. Results revealed no significant relationships, likely due to too few participants per cell. The cell means did follow the same pattern as the previous 3 way interaction with the greatest difference between participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity, and those who reported low levels of other-forgiveness and high levels of self-forgiveness and conflict intensity (see Table 42). No support for Hypothesis 3 was found.

Table 41
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You - Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| OF x SF x CI | 8.23E-05 | .26* | .06 | .35 |
| Constant | 45.10 | | | |
| | | Total | .06 | |
| F = 6.55, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

It is possible that the combined (self and other) conflict intensity measure masked intensity subscale differences within the subset of participants who reported being hurt by a family

member. A regression analysis was conducted to test this notion. Results of the analysis with other-intensity (rather than combined intensity) as a predictor revealed that other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor (see Table 43). Results of the analysis with self-intensity as a

Table 42

Mean Levels of ALNOF by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Conflict Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Low Conflict Intensity | | High Conflict Intensity | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 44.20 (7) | 51.50 (7) | 46.00 (7) | 51.71 (7) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 43.57 (4) | 43.33 (9) | 45.46 (10) | 40.00 (15) |

Note: Scale scores range from 15 to 90 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 43

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 5.10E-02 | .26* | .11 | .34 |
| Constant | 45.01 | | | |
| | | Total | .11 | |
| F = 5.47, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

predictor revealed that other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and the 3-way interaction were significant (see Table 44).

Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction indicated that participants who reported high conflict self-intensity, low other-forgiveness and high self-forgiveness scored significantly higher on ALNOF than did participants who reported high levels of conflict self-intensity, other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness (see Table 45). These results did not support Hypothesis 3.

Table 44

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 6.26E-02 | .32* | .12 | .34 |
| Self-Forgiveness | -.33 | -.24* | .06 | -.12 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1.43E-04 | .27* | .06 | .37 |
| Constant | 45.17 | | | |
| | | Total | .24 | |
| F = 6.36, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

Results for participants who reported that friends had hurt them replicated the overall false forgiveness findings with other-forgiveness being the only significant predictor of ALNOF (see Table 46). Given the possibility that the combined (self and other) conflict intensity measure masked intensity subscale differences, the analysis was repeated, running other-intensity and self-intensity separately. The main effects for other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict other-intensity were significant in the other-intensity results (see Table 47). With the self-intensity results, the other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness main effects were significant

(see Table 48). Masking effects were found but the different results did not support Hypothesis

3.

Table 45

Mean Levels of ALNOF by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Low Conflict Self-intensity | | High Conflict Self-intensity | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 48.42 (8) | 48.68 (9) | 49.91 (6) | 50.83 _a (5) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 43.22 (5) | 44.94 (9) | 48.60 (9) | 39.68 _b (15) |

Note: Scale scores range form 15 to 90 with higher scores indicating higher levels of Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness. Means with different subscripts are significantly different $p < .05$. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 46

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|---------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 6.91E-02 | .42** | .18 | .42 |
| Constant | 48.92 | | | |
| | | Total | .18 | |
| F = 8.39, $p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

** $p < .01$

Table 47

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 8.00E-02 | .48** | .16 | .40 |
| Self-Forgiveness | .11 | .26* | .06 | .30 |
| Other-Intensity | .31 | .23* | .05 | .05 |
| Constant | 45.17 | | | |
| | | Total | .27 | |
| F = 7.71, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 48

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 7.21E-02 | .44** | .20 | .44 |
| Self-Forgiveness | .11 | .25* | .04 | .27 |
| Constant | 48.69 | | | |
| | | Total | .24 | |
| F = 8.69, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

**p < .01

Further analyses were conducted to test the possibility that combined relationship status (over, worse, same/better) masked the results of ALNOF in the testing of Hypothesis 3. The

relationship between ALNOF and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and the intensity variables (self, other, and combined) was retested selecting for each of the three relationship states. A series of regression analyses with personal resolution as the criterion variable, and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity (self, other, and combined) as the predictor variables were utilized to test this notion.

Results of the regression analysis for those participants who reported the relationship to be over revealed that other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor of ALNOF (see Table 49). To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity (self and other) with participants who reported their relationship to be over, two regression analyses were conducted, both with ALNOF as the criterion, and one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other-intensity as predictors and the other with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and self-intensity as predictors. Results of both analyses replicated the results of the combined (other and self) intensity analysis with other-forgiveness predicting ALNOF.

Table 49
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Over)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 8.25E-02 | .40** | .17 | .41 |
| Constant | 43.47 | | | |
| | | Total | .17 | |
| F = 5.39, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

**p < .01

Results of the regression analysis for participants who reported the relationship to be worse were not significant, $F(1, 56) = 1.04$, ns. To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity (self and other) with participants who reported their relationship to be worse, two regression analyses were conducted. Results of the other-intensity analysis replicated the results of the combined (other and self) intensity analysis and was not significant $F(1, 56) = 1.33$, ns. Results of the self-intensity analysis revealed that other-forgiveness significantly predicted ALNOF (see Table 50). Increases in other-forgiveness were associated with decreases in ALNOF as would be expected.

Table 50

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Worse)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|---------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 7.34E-02 | .32* | .05 | .27 |
| Constant | 46.36 | | | |
| | | Total | .05 | |
| $F = 3.74, p < .05$ | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

** $p < .05$

The overall F test for participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better was significant at $F(2, 47) = 3.194$, $p < .05$, although none of the predictors reached significance. To test for the masking effect of combined conflict intensity (self and other) with participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better, two regression analyses were conducted. Results for the other-intensity analysis revealed that other forgiveness significantly predicted ALNOF (see Table 51). Again, increases in other-forgiveness were

associated with decreases in ALNOF. Results for the self-intensity analysis were not significant, $F(2, 47) = 2.93$, ns.

Table 51
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on ALNOF at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Same or Better)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|---------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 6.13E-02 | .30* | .11 | .33 |
| Constant | 48.16 | | | |
| | | Total | .11 | |
| $F = 3.51, p < .05$ | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.
** $p < .05$

The false forgiveness subscale (FFS) was submitted to a regression analysis as well, with FFS as the criterion variable, and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and conflict intensity as the predictor variables. Results of this analysis with the combined intensity indicated that other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor of FFS (see Table 52). What was interesting was that the relationship was positive. A one unit increase in other-forgiveness was associated with a .22 increase in FFS.

Additional regression analyses with FFS as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity (self and/or other) as the predictor variables were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better). Two regression analysis were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity (in turn) replacing combined intensity as the third predictor variable. Both results replicated the

analysis with combined intensity insofar as other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor of FFS (see Tables 53 and 54).

Table 52
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Combined Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -2.43E-02 | -.22** | .05 | -.23 |
| Constant | 33.78 | | | |
| | | Total | .05 | |
| F = 4.83, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

**p < .01

Table 53
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -2.52E-02 | -.22* | .05 | -.23 |
| Constant | 33.76 | | | |
| | | Total | .05 | |
| F = 5.41, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

Table 55 shows the results of the regression analysis selecting for those participants who reported being hurt by a family member. Again, other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor of FFS.

Table 54

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -2.61E-02 | -.23** | .05 | -.23 |
| Constant | 33.61 | | | |
| | | Total | .05 | |
| F = 4.44, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

**p < .01

Table 55

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | -4.30E-02 | -.31* | .11 | -.33 |
| Constant | | | | |
| | | Total | .11 | |
| F = 4.07, P < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

Regression analyses of other-intensity and self-intensity were conducted selecting for participants who reported being hurt by a family member to test the notion that the combined (self and other) intensity measure masked intensity subscale differences. No masking occurred as the results replicated those of the regression analysis with the combined (self and other) intensity variable such that other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor of FFS.

A regression analysis was run on the responses of participants who reported a friend had hurt them. Results were not significant, $F(1, 76) = 1.16$, ns. Separate analyses of other-

intensity and self were conducted selecting for participants who reported being hurt by a friend, and were also not significant, $F(1,77) = 1.02$, and $F(1,78) = .08$ respectively, ns.

Further regression analyses were conducted to test the possibility that combined relationship status (over, worse, same/better) masked the results with FFS. The regression analysis results for participants who responded that their relationship was over indicated that the 3-way interaction (other forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) significantly predicted FFS (see Table 56). Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction. Results revealed no significant relationships. The 3-way interaction result was likely spurious due to the small number of participants per cell (see Table 57).

Table 56
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block (Relationship status – Over)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| OF x SF x CI | -5.07E-.5 | -.27* | .08 | -.27 |
| Constant | 39.92 | | | |
| | | Total | .08 | |
| F = 4.06, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign. . OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

*p < .05

Table 57

**Mean Levels of FFS by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Conflict Intensity
(Relationship Status – Over)**

| | Low Conflict Intensity | | High Conflict Intensity | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 31.55 (11) | 34.55 (11) | 31.80 (10) | 32.08 (12) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 32.00 (1) | 36.00 (2) | 31.00 (2) | 35.67 (3) |

Note: Scale scores range from 10 to 60 with higher scores indicating higher levels of False Forgiveness (subscale). Cell n's are in parentheses.

To test for the potential masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported their relationship to be over, two regression analyses were conducted with FFS as the criterion variable: one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other-intensity as the predictor variables, and one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and self-intensity as the predictor variables. Results of both analyses were not significant, $F(1, 51) = 3.07$, and $F(1, 51) = 1.74$, respectively, ns.

The regression analysis selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be worse indicated that conflict intensity significantly predicted FFS (see Table 58).

To test for the potential masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported their relationship to be worse, two regression analyses were conducted with FFS as the criterion variable: one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other-intensity as the predictor variables, and one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and self-intensity as the predictor variables. Masking effects were found, as results for the other-intensity analysis were not significant, $F(1, 54) = 0.00$, ns, while results for the self-intensity analysis indicated that

self-intensity significantly predicted FFS (see Table 59). Thus, support for Hypothesis 3 was not found.

Table 58
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Worse)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Conflict Intensity | -.21 | -.36* | .09 | -.29 |
| Constant | 78.85 | | | |
| | | Total | .09 | |
| F = 5.08, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

Table 59
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on FFS at the Third Block (Relationship Status – Worse)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Conflict Intensity | -.30 | -.30* | .07 | -.26 |
| Constant | 33.80 | | | |
| | | Total | .07 | |
| F = 3.43, p < .05 | | | | |

Note: The use of centered variables resulted in a change in correlation sign.

*p < .05

The results of the regression analysis selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better results were not significant, $F(1,48) = 1.98$, ns. To test for the potential masking effect of combined conflict intensity with participants who reported their

relationship to be the same or better, two regression analyses were conducted with FFS as the criterion variable: one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other-intensity as the predictor variables and one with other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and self-intensity as the predictor variables. No masking effects were found as results for both other-intensity and self-intensity analyses were not significant, $F(1, 48) = .31$, and $F(1, 48) = .10$ respectively, ns.

Further Analysis of the In-Depth Description Data

There are a number of variables that may have an impact on the outcome of the test of Hypothesis 3 in the in-depth description data. Additional analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: other-intensity, self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same/better).

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the Hypothesis 3 in-depth description analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) \times 2 (self-forgiveness) \times 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking was evident in that both the other-intensity and self-intensity analyses mirrored the results with combined intensity with other-forgiveness reaching significance, $F(1, 153) = 5.06$ for other-intensity and $F(1, 155) = 6.07$ for self-intensity, $ps < .05$.

The possibility that the combined who hurt you (family and friend) variable masked results of the hypothesis 3 in-depth description analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) \times 2 (self-forgiveness) \times 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were run to test this possibility. Results for participants who reported being hurt by a family member were not significant (see Table 60).

Table 60

Analysis of Variance: False Forgiveness by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Who Hurt You – Family)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|----------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | .80 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .89 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .25 |
| OF x SF | 1 | 1.33 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .37 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .87 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | 2.11 |
| Error | 59 | (197.65) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the family subset analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking had occurred, as the results for both analyses were also not significant.

Results of the analysis for participants who reported being hurt by a friend indicated that other-forgiveness was significant, $F(1, 70) = 5.00, p < .05$. Cell means indicated that participants whose in-depth descriptions were coded as being high in other-forgiveness reported significantly less false forgiveness than participants whose in-depth descriptions were coded as being low in other-forgiveness (see Table 61). This result was a replication of the initial test of Hypothesis 3 with the in-depth description data.

Table 61
Mean Levels of False Forgiveness by Self-Forgiveness (In-Depth Description Data)

| | Low Other-Forgiveness | High Other-Forgiveness |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personal Resolution | 84.32 _a (115) | 77.34 _b (63) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significant $p < .05$. Scale scores range from 25 to 150 with higher scores indicating higher levels of false forgiveness. Cell n's are in parentheses.

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the friend subset analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking occurred as the results replicated the combined intensity results for participants who reported being hurt by a friend where other-forgiveness was significant, $F(1, 70) = 5.56$ for other-intensity and $F(1, 72) = 3.96$ for self-intensity, $ps < .05$.

Further analyses were conducted to test the possibility that combined relationship status (over, worse, same/better) masked the results of the Hypothesis 3 in-depth description analysis. Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analyses of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be over were not significant (see Table 62). The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the relationship over subset analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking occurred, as results of both analyses were not significant.

Table 62

Analysis of Variance: False Forgiveness by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status – Over)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|----------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 3.14 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .02 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .06 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .74 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .98 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .00 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .35 |
| Error | 45 | (205.44) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be worse was not significant (see Table 63). The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the relationship worse subset analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking had occurred, as results of both analyses were not significant.

Results of the 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance selecting for participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better was not significant (see Table 64). The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other)

Table 63

Analysis of Variance: False Forgiveness by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status – Worse)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|----------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 2.69 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .06 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .22 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .15 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .00 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .15 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .40 |
| Error | 49 | (173.43) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

Table 64

Analysis of Variance: False Forgiveness by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity (In-Depth Description Data, Relationship Status – Same or Better)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|----|----------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | .03 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | .53 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .35 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .17 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .40 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .20 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .00 |
| Error | 44 | (151.79) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

variable masked results of the relationship better subset analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. No masking had occurred, as results of both analyses were not significant.

It is possible that the combined false forgiveness scale (ALNOF and FFS) masked results that were supportive of Hypothesis 3 with the in-depth description data. Given the limited results of the false forgiveness analyses with ALNOF and FFS combined it was deemed unlikely that separate analysis of the subscales would render much additional information. As such, only one regression analysis was run with each subscale (ALNOF and FFS as the criterion variable and other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and conflict intensity as the predictor variables). The ALNOF regression results replicated those of the overall false forgiveness with other-forgiveness being significant, $F(1, 153) = 15.31, p < .01$, while the FFS regression results were not significant (see Table 65). Results of the additional analyses testing Hypothesis 3 indicated that some masking occurred but overall, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Hypothesis 4 (Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness in High Intensity Conflict)

Hypothesis 4 stated that the degree to which a person has been able to attain personal resolution would be negatively related to false forgiveness when conflict intensity was high.

Two correlational analyses were run, with participants conflict intensity scores divided into high and low categories using the median split method. In order for the hypothesis to be supported, personal resolution and false forgiveness would have to be positively correlated for participants who reported high levels of intensity but not for those who reported low levels of intensity. Higher scores on the personal resolution scale indicate higher resolution. Results of the correlations indicated that the hypothesis was not supported although relationships for

participants who reported high levels of intensity were in the predicted direction. The relationship between personal resolution and false forgiveness was significant for participants who reported both high and low levels of intensity (see Tables 66 and 67). Increases in personal resolution were associated with decreases in total false forgiveness.

Table 65
Analysis of Variance: FFS by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness, and Conflict Intensity
(In-Depth Description Data)

| Source | DF | F |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|
| Other-Forgiveness (OF) | 1 | 2.93 |
| Self-Forgiveness (SF) | 1 | 1.82 |
| Conflict Intensity (CI) | 1 | .99 |
| OF x SF | 1 | .53 |
| OF x CI | 1 | .16 |
| SF x CI | 1 | .01 |
| OF x SF x CI | 1 | .06 |
| Error | 156 | (68.90) |

Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity

Table 66
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.22* | -.32** | .15 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .76** | .33** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.36 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 67
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.29** | -.24* | -.12 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .82** | .43** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.17 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Further Analysis of Hypothesis 4

There are a number of variables that may have an impact on the outcome of Hypothesis

4. A series of correlational analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: the false forgiveness subscales (ALNOF and FFS), other-intensity and self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over/worse/the same or better). Analyses were conducted with the ALNOF and FFS subscales

separately to test the notion that the combination of the two subscales masked subscale differences. As can be seen in Tables 66 and 67, the ALNOF results replicated the overall false forgiveness scale results and FFS did not. The correlation between ALNOF and personal resolution was negative and significant whereas the correlation between FFS and personal resolution was not significant. The analysis of the subscales separately did not result in support for Hypothesis 4.

Correlational analyses were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately to test the notion that the combination of the two subscales masked subscale differences. The results of the low other-intensity category analysis indicated that increases in personal resolution were significantly related to decreases in ALNOF. Neither the total false forgiveness scale nor the FFS were significant (see Tables 68 and 69). The high other-intensity category results replicated the combined intensity (other and self) analysis with overall false forgiveness and ALNOF reaching significance. Results of the self-intensity analysis replicated the other-intensity results (see Tables 70 and 71). Thus, no support was shown for hypothesis 4.

Table 68
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Other-Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.12 | -.23* | .17 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .77** | .28** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.40** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 69
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.40** | -.36** | -.15 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .82** | .44** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.15 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 70
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.16 | -.23** | .08 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .76** | .42** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.27** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 71
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Self-Intensity

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.38** | -.32** | -.11 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .83** | .32** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.27** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Results of the correlational analysis selecting for participants who reported that a family member had hurt them indicated that higher levels of ALNOF were significantly related to lower levels of personal resolution for participants who reported low levels of intensity (see Table 72). At the same time, higher levels of personal resolution were related to higher levels of FFS. This was an unexpected finding. Total false forgiveness was not related to personal resolution. Results for participants within this category who reported high levels of intensity indicated no relationship between personal resolution and total false forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS (see Table 73). No support for Hypothesis 4 was found.

Results of the correlational analysis selecting for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them indicated that high levels of total false forgiveness and ALNOF were significantly related to low levels of personal resolution for participants who reported low levels of intensity (see Tables 74 and 75). The pattern of results was the same for participants within this category who reported high levels of intensity.

Table 72

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.11 | -.38* | .35* |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .63** | .31 |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.56** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 73

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.26 | -.18 | -.17 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .81** | .49** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.11 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 74
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.28* | -.34* | .09 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .77** | .38** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.31* |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 75
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.22* | -.32** | -.15 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .76** | .33** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.36* |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

**p < .01

The correlational analysis was conducted again focusing on the who hurt you (family or friend) variable with other-intensity and self-intensity separately to check for potential masking effects of the combined intensity variable. The results can be seen in Tables 76 through 83 and are described below.

Table 76
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.03 | -.34* | .46* |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .70** | .04 |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.69** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Results indicated that ALNOF was negatively related and FFS was positively related to personal resolution for the low other-intensity/family group, again, an unexpected result. Total false forgiveness was not significantly related to personal resolution. High levels of ALNOF were associated with low levels of personal resolution whereas high levels of FFS were associated with high levels of personal resolution. For those participants in this subset who reported high levels of other-intensity, only total false forgiveness was positively related to personal resolution (see Table 77).

Results for the correlational analysis of who hurt you family self-intensity low and high can be seen in Tables 78 and 79. In the low self-intensity analysis, there were no significant relationships between the false forgiveness variables and personal resolution. In the high self-intensity analysis both ALNOF and total false forgiveness were positively correlated with personal resolution. This result was supportive of Hypothesis 4

Table 77

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.29* | -.21 | -.19 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .80** | .53* |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.08 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 78

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.15 | -.20 | -.14 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .75** | .47** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.23 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Results for the analysis of who hurt you – friend other-intensity low and high can be seen in Tables 80 and 81. In the who hurt you – friend low other-intensity analysis only ALNOF was related to personal resolution. As ALNOF increased, personal resolution decreased. In the who hurt you – friend high other-intensity analysis, both the total false forgiveness and ALNOF were significantly related to personal resolution. As total false forgiveness or ALNOF increased, personal resolution decreased.

Table 79
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.35* | -.28* | -.14 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .81** | .43* |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.19 |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 80
Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.20 | -.25* | .07 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .80** | .39** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.24* |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 81

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.46** | -.39* | -.04 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .85** | .07 |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.46** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Results for the analysis of who hurt you – friend self-intensity low and high can be seen in Tables 82 and 83. Results replicated those of who hurt you – friend other-intensity. In the who hurt you – friend self-intensity low analysis, only ALNOF was related to personal resolution. As ALNOF increased, personal resolution decreased. In the friend self-intensity high analysis, both the total false forgiveness and ALNOF were significantly related to personal resolution. As total false forgiveness or ALNOF increased, personal resolution decreased.

Table 82

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.24 | -.29* | .04 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .73** | .43** |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.30* |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Table 83

Correlations Between Personal Resolution and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Personal Resolution | False Forgiveness | ALNOF | FFS |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|
| Personal Resolution | -- | -.33* | -.29* | -.07 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .88** | .08 |
| ALNOF | | | -- | -.40** |
| FFS | | | | -- |

*p < .05

** p < .01

Some masking effects were found in the additional analyses regarding Hypothesis 4.

Support was found for Hypothesis 4 when the focus was on self-intensity and the participant reported a conflict with a family member. For this group, false forgiveness was negatively related to personal resolution when self-intensity was high, but not when it was low.

Hypothesis 5 (Relationship Satisfaction at High Levels of Conflict Intensity)

Hypothesis 5 stated that at high levels of conflict intensity, forgiveness of self, and other-forgiveness together would predict relationship satisfaction. That is, high levels of other-forgiveness or self-forgiveness alone would not predict relationship satisfaction. The in-depth description data was coded for current relationship state. Participants who indicated that their relationship was over were not included in this analysis, resulting in a dataset with an N of 118. Regarding the testing of Hypothesis 5, the three-way interaction (other-forgiveness x self-forgiveness x conflict intensity) was expected to significantly predict relationship satisfaction. As can be seen in Table 84, this was not the case. Only the main effect for other-forgiveness significantly predicted relationship satisfaction with increases in other-forgiveness associated with increases in relationship satisfaction. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Table 84

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 4.25E-03 | .53** | .30 | .54 |
| Constant | 1.89 | | | |
| | | Total | .32 | |
| F = 24.04, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

****p < .01**

In-Depth Description Analysis

A 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (conflict intensity) analysis of variance was conducted with the in-depth description data. Results indicated that only the main effect for other-forgiveness was significant, $F(1, 103) = 20.44, p < .05$, replicating the results of the regression analysis. Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Further Analysis of Hypothesis 5

Additional regression analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables on the results of Hypothesis 5: other-intensity and self-intensity, who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend), and current relationship status (over, worse, same or better).

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the test of Hypothesis 5 was investigated and consequently the analysis was repeated with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. The results of the other-intensity analysis indicated that the 3-way interaction between other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and conflict other-intensity was significant (see Table 85). Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were

conducted to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction. As can be seen in Table 86, participants who reported high levels of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and other-intensity reported significantly higher levels of relationship satisfaction than participants who reported low levels of other-forgiveness along with high levels of self-forgiveness and high levels of other-intensity. This result is supportive of Hypothesis 5. At the same time, given the small number of participants per cell (e.g., $n = 3$), the 3-way interaction may potentially have been spurious. As such, caution needs to be taken in any interpretation of these results. Raw relationship satisfaction mean scores are reported for ease of interpretation although transformed relationship satisfaction scores were used in all analyses.

Table 85
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 4.29E-03 | .53** | .30 | .54 |
| OF x SF x OI | 5.23E-06 | .17* | .03 | .21 |
| Constant | 1.89 | | | |
| | | Total | .33 | |
| F = 25.26, $p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, OI = Other-Intensity.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 86

Mean Levels of Relationship Satisfaction by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Other-Intensity

| | Low Other-Intensity | | High Other-Intensity | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 2.36 (13) | 3.83 (6) | 3.00 (13) | 1.33 _a (3) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 4.11 (20) | 3.67 (21) | 4.18 (15) | 5.05 _b (16) |

Note: levels of relationship satisfaction with different subscripts are significantly different at $p < .05$. All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Raw relationship satisfaction scale scores range from 1 to 6 with higher scores indicating higher levels of relationship satisfaction. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Results of the self-intensity data indicated that the main effect for other-forgiveness predicted relationship satisfaction (see Table 87). This result did not support Hypothesis 5.

Table 87

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 9.56E-04 | .49** | .25 | .50 |
| Constant | .50 | | | |
| | | Total | .25 | |
| F = 17.58, $p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, SI = Self-Intensity.

** $p < .01$

The effects of the forgiveness and intensity variables on relationship satisfaction may potentially have been masked by the combination of who the other party to the conflict was

(family and friend). To test this possibility, the data was reanalyzed based on responses to the question “who hurt you” (family or friend). Results indicated that for those participants who reported that a family member had hurt them, the 3-way interaction of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and conflict intensity predicted relationship satisfaction (see Table 88).

Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were conducted to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction. The results were not significant, $F(1, 2) = 9.00$, ns. As can be seen in Table 89, the two cells that showed the largest mean differences were the low other-forgiveness, high self-forgiveness, low intensity cell and the low other-forgiveness, high self-forgiveness, and high intensity cell. Again given the small number of participants per cell (e.g., $n = 2$), the result was likely spurious and it is concluded that the results of the analysis selecting for participants who reported being hurt by a family member did not support Hypothesis 5.

Table 88
Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.17E-03 | .44** | .24 | .49 |
| OF x SF x CI | 3.89E-06 | .26* | .06 | .34 |
| Constant | 1.91 | | | |
| | | Total | .30 | |
| F = 11.39, $p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 89

Mean Levels of Relationship Satisfaction by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Low Other-Intensity | | High Other-Intensity | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 2.56 (9) | 5.00 (2) | 2.71 (7) | 1.50 (2) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 3.57 (7) | 4.00 (6) | 4.46 (11) | 4.82 (11) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Raw relationship satisfaction scale scores range form 1 to 6 with higher scores indicating higher levels of relationship satisfaction. Cell n's are in parentheses.

It is possible that the total conflict intensity (other and self) measure masked subscale differences with the who hurt you - family analysis. To test this notion, analyses were conducted separately with other-intensity and self-intensity. As can be seen in Tables 90 and 91, the significant 3-way interaction found in the combined intensity analysis was also found in the other-intensity analysis but not in the self-intensity analysis. In the self-intensity analysis, only the main effect for other-forgiveness predicted relationship satisfaction. The 3-way interaction did not reach significance.

Analysis of variance post hoc multiple comparison tests were conducted to examine the cell mean differences of the 3-way interaction. The results were significant. As can be seen in Table 92, the result is likely spurious due to one cell having only 1 participant. Analysis of the responses of participants who reported being hurt by a friend indicated that only the main effect for other-forgiveness significantly predicted relationship satisfaction (see Table 93).

Table 90

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 3.18E-03 | .44** | .24 | .49 |
| OF x SF x OI | 7.16E-06 | .28* | .08 | .36 |
| Constant | 1.92 | | | |
| | | Total | .32 | |
| F = 12.08, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, OI = Other-intensity.

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 91

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Family)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 8.76E-04 | .51** | .21 | .46 |
| Constant | .48 | | | |
| | | Total | .21 | |
| F = 6.85, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CIS = Conflict Self-intensity.

**p < .01

Table 92

Mean Levels of Relationship Satisfaction by Other-Forgiveness, Self-Forgiveness and Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Low Other-Intensity | | High Other-Intensity | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness | Low Self-Forgiveness | High Self-Forgiveness |
| Low Other-Forgiveness | 2.38 (8) | 4.00 (3) | 2.86 (8) | 1.00 _a (1) |
| High Other-Forgiveness | 3.89 (8) | 4.00 (8) | 4.30 (10) | 5.00 _b (9) |

Note: All tests done using Bonferonni procedure. Means with different subscripts are significantly different $p < .01$. Raw relationship satisfaction scale scores range from 1 to 6 with higher scores indicating higher levels of relationship satisfaction. Cell n's are in parentheses.

Table 93

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 5.51E-03 | .60** | .36 | .60 |
| Constant | 1.86 | | | |
| | | Total | .36 | |
| F = 12.19, $p < .01$ | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

** $p < .01$

It is possible that the combined conflict intensity (self and other together) measure masked intensity subscale differences in the who hurt you – friend analysis. Results of the separate analysis of the other-intensity and self-intensity data replicated the above results (see Tables 94 and 95). The data was not analyzed based on current state of the relationship, as the number of relevant participants was too small.

Table 94

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Other-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 1.21E-03 | .55** | .30 | .55 |
| Constant | .58 | | | |
| | | Total | .30 | |
| F = 19.13, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

**p < .01

Table 95

Hierarchical Regression of Forgiveness and Self-Intensity Variables Regressed on Relationship Satisfaction at the Third Block (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| Variables | B | Beta | R Sq. Change | Correlation |
|--------------------|----------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| Other-Forgiveness | 1.22E-03 | .56** | .31 | .56 |
| Constant | .26 | | | |
| | | Total | .31 | |
| F = 20.24, p < .01 | | | | |

Note: OF = Other-Forgiveness, SF = Self-Forgiveness, CI = Conflict Intensity.

**p < .01

In-Depth Description Further Analyses

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the in-depth description Hypothesis 5 analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) x 2 (self-forgiveness) x 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were conducted with other-intensity and self-intensity separately. Results of the other-intensity analysis replicated the overall analysis with

only other-forgiveness reaching significance, $F(1, 103) = 24.10, p < .05$. Results of the self-intensity analysis were somewhat different in that the main effects for other-forgiveness and self-intensity were significant, $F_s(1, 103) = 23.74$ and 4.25 , respectively, $p < .05$. Masking was evident but support for Hypothesis 5 was not found.

The possibility that the combined who hurt you (family and friend) variable masked results of the in-depth description Hypothesis 5 analysis was tested. Two 2 (other-forgiveness) \times 2 (self-forgiveness) \times 2 (intensity) analyses of variance were run to test this possibility. Results of the who hurt you – family analysis with other-intensity and self combined, and with other-intensity alone replicated the initial in-depth description analysis with the other-forgiveness main effect being significant, $F_s(1,50) = 7.36$ and 9.04 respectively, $ps < .05$. The results of the analysis with self-intensity alone were slightly different in that the main effects for other-forgiveness and self-intensity were significant, $F_s(1,50) = 8.80$ and 5.42 respectively, $ps < .05$.

Results of the who hurt you friend analysis indicated that the main effects of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were significant, $F_s(1,39) = 23.37$ and 4.57 respectively, $ps < .05$. Results for the other-intensity and self-intensity analyses showed only the main effect of other-forgiveness to be significant, $F_s(1,39) = 17.35$ and 18.43 respectively, $ps < .05$. The impact of current relationship state was not analyzed, as there were too few relevant participants per cell.

The multiple testing of Hypothesis 5 uncovered some masking effects and led to one supportive result. This result was likely spurious due to too few participants. Given this outcome, no support was found for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6 (False Forgiveness and Relationship Satisfaction)

This hypothesis stated that when interaction intensity was high, false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction would be negatively related. Correlational analyses were conducted between false forgiveness, relationship satisfaction for participants who reported conflict intensity as high or low. The results can be seen in Tables 96 and 97. They did not support Hypothesis 6, as relationship satisfaction and false forgiveness were not significantly correlated. This was the case regardless of whether conflict intensity was high or low.

Table 96
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Conflict Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.06 | -.12 | -.01 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .84** | .47** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.10 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** p < .01

Further Analysis of Hypothesis 6

A series of correlational analyses were conducted to test the influence of the following variables: the false forgiveness subscales—attitudes leading to non-forgiveness (ALNOF) and the false forgiveness subscale (FFS), other-intensity and self-intensity, and who the other party was (who hurt you—family/friend). The impact of current relationship status (over, worse, same or better) was not investigated due to too few relevant participants on the variables of interest.

Table 97

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Conflict Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .15 | .12 | .01 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .66** | .36** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.47** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** p < .01

It is possible that the total false forgiveness measure masked subscale differences. To test this notion, a correlational analysis was conducted with total false forgiveness, the two subscales (ALNOF, FFS), and relationship status. As can be seen in Tables 96 and 97, neither of the false forgiveness subscales were related to relationship satisfaction. It is possible that the total conflict intensity measure masked subscale differences in relation to Hypothesis 6. Results of correlations conducted to test this notion identified no significant relationship between relationship satisfaction and total false forgiveness as well as its subscales for participants who reported other-intensity to be low or high (see Tables 98 and 99).

The self-intensity analysis identified some curious relationships. Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness, and ALNOF for participants who reported self-intensity to be low, were significant and positive (see Table 100). Relationship satisfaction increased as total false forgiveness or ALNOF increased, when conflict self-intensity was low. Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness and ALNOF for participants who reported the self-intensity to be high, were significant and negative (see Table

101). Relationship satisfaction decreased as total false forgiveness and/or ALNOF increased, when self-intensity was high. The combined intensity measure masked self and other intensity differences.

Table 98
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Other-Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .17 | .12 | .02 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .70** | .25* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.51* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

*p < .05

**p < .01

Table 99
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.09 | -.18 | .04 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .81** | .51** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.10 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** p < .01

Table 100

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .25* | .28* | -.08 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .70** | .38** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.40** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 101

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Conflict Self-Intensity

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.24* | -.33* | .03 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .84** | .45** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.11 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

It is possible that the effects of the forgiveness and intensity variables on relationship satisfaction were masked by the combination of who the other party to the conflict was (family and friend). To test this possibility, the data was analyzed selecting for family or friend.

Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness and its subscales for participants who reported that a family member had hurt them and intensity was low or high, were not significant (see Tables 102 and 103). This was also the case for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them and intensity was low (see Table 104).

Table 102
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .01 | .21 | -.24 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .54** | .35* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.60** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 103
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .02 | -.07 | .14 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .81** | .51** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.09 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

Table 104

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .02 | -.15 | .22 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .68** | .43* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.37* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Only the FFS subscale and relationship satisfaction were negatively correlated for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them and intensity was high (see Table 105). Relationship satisfaction increased as false forgiveness (subscale) decreased for those participants who reported being hurt by a friend where the intensity of the conflict was high.

Table 105

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.21 | -.14 | -.57** |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .88** | .30 |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.17 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

The possibility that the combined intensity (self and other) variable masked results of the who hurt you - family analysis was tested. Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness and its subscales and low or high other-intensity were not significant for participants who reported that a family member had hurt them (see Tables 106 and 107). The ALNOF subscale scores and relationship satisfaction were positively correlated for participants who reported that a family member had hurt them and self-intensity was low (see Table 108). Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness and its subscales for participants who reported that a family member had hurt them and other-intensity was high were not significant (see Table 109). This was not expected.

Table 106
Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS
with Low Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .09 | .13 | -.10 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .70** | .04 |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.69** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 107

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .02 | -.05 | .10 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .78** | .57** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.07 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** p < .01

Table 108

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .23 | .35* | -.18 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .67** | .38* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.43* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* p < .05

** p < .01

Table 109

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Family)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.20 | -.28 | .08 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .80** | .48** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.14 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

Correlations between relationship satisfaction, total false forgiveness and its subscales for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them and other-intensity was low or high were not significant (see Tables 110 and 111). This was also the case for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them and self-intensity was low (see Table 112). Total false forgiveness and the ALNOF subscale were negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction for participants who reported that a friend had hurt them and self-intensity was high (see Table 113). This is supportive of Hypothesis 6.

Some masking effects were discovered and support was found for Hypothesis 6 with participants who reported that a friend had hurt them when focusing only on self-intensity. No other support was found for Hypothesis 6.

Table 110

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .05 | -.08 | .16 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .68** | .44** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.35* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 111

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Other-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.26 | -.35 | -.03 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .88** | .21 |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.28 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

Table 112

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction and False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with Low Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | .09 | .07 | .01 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .68** | .41* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.39* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 113

Correlations Between Relationship Satisfaction, False Forgiveness, ALNOF, and FFS with High Self-Intensity (Who Hurt You – Friend)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Relationship Satisfaction | -- | -.39* | -.44** | -.13 |
| False Forgiveness | | -- | .89** | .37* |
| Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness | | | -- | -.09 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | | | | -- |

** $p < .01$

The results of the tests of the six hypotheses can be seen in Table 114. Little support for the hypotheses was found, with the only support being in the further analysis of Hypotheses 4 and 6. Specifically, support for Hypothesis 4 was found when the focus was on self-intensity and the participant reported a conflict with a family member. For this group, false forgiveness (Total and ALNOF) was negatively related to personal resolution when self-intensity was high, but not when it was low. Support for Hypothesis 6 was found with participants who reported that a friend had hurt them when focusing only on self-intensity. For this group, false forgiveness (Total and ALNOF) and relationship satisfaction were negatively related when interaction intensity was high but not when interaction intensity was low.

Table 114
Hypothesis Test Results

| | Hypothesis 1 | Hypothesis 2 | Hypothesis 3 | Hypothesis 4 | Hypothesis 5 | Hypothesis 6 |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Initial Test | Not supported | Not Supported | Not Supported | Not supported | Not supported | Not Supported |
| In-Depth Description Test | Not Supported | Not Supported | Not Supported | | Not Supported | |
| Further Analysis | Not Supported | | Not Supported | Minimal Support | Not Supported | Minimal Support |

Discussion

It was a bit disheartening to find little-to-no support for my hypotheses. At the same time, I knew going into this research endeavor that I was breaking new ground in bringing the interpersonal conflict and forgiveness literature together. In that sense, any result is informative, and that is the spirit in which I have chosen to view the findings.

That none of the hypotheses were directly supported might reflect negatively on the model upon which the hypotheses were based. However, it may be premature to abandon the model for a number of reasons. First there were concerns with some of the measures and as a result the hypotheses may not have been tested adequately. Second, further analyses suggested the existence of threads of relationships that are easily managed in the model. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Regarding measurement tools, there were issues concerning the reliability of the personal resolution scale. The coefficient alphas of .78 and .66 for factors one and two of the personal resolution scale are marginal at best for research purposes. That Factor Two consisted of only two items likely contributed to the low alpha, as it is unlikely that the two items in-and-of themselves adequately represented the domain. The low reliability means that the results in the current research are less likely to be replicable in future research. Further research is needed to better understand the concept of personal resolution and to identify additional items for inclusion in the scale.

There also were concerns about the Conflict Interaction Intensity Instrument as it was used here. One concept this instrument does not take into account is the perceptual biases that are built in to the way people interpret their own behavior and the behavior of others. One that has real potential to have influenced the results of this research is that people tend to attribute the

actions of others to the internal characteristics of that person, and attribute their own actions to situational factors (Jones & Nisbett, 1971). In doing so people tend to justify their own behavior in conflict and blame the other party. This quality has the potential of translating into participants reporting their own behavior as being less intense and the behavior of the other party as being more intense, minimizing the impact of their behavior while maximizing the impact of the other person's behavior. This tendency may have influenced the results of the present research. One possible solution for this tendency in future research would be to gather data on intensity from both parties to the conflict and aggregate the results. Given the above comments on measurement, what can the results tell us?

I have approached the discussion of the results from three levels. First I will discuss the results of each hypothesis. Following this discussion I will look at the results across all of the hypotheses to determine if any patterns exist. Third, I will examine the results as they reflect on the model.

Discussion at the Hypothesis level

With regard to Hypothesis 1, the results strongly suggest that other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness are involved in finding personal resolution, and therefore are in line with existing forgiveness literature which states that these processes will allow the victim to let go of the injury and move on (Bauer et al., 1992; Enright et al., 1996; Flanigan, 1992, 1996). However, the results do not support the hypothesized role of conflict intensity. The results indicated that other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness main effects predicted personal resolution in the overall analysis as well as when other-intensity and self-intensity were divided, with all participants as well as those under the age of 36, when the conflict was with a friend, and when the relationship was over. The in-depth description analysis supported the role of other-forgiveness but not that

of self-forgiveness. These analyses suggest that the results were relatively robust, while also indicating that the relationships were not as simple as predicted. The additional analyses revealed the complexity of these relationships.

To begin, there were differences in results based on the current status of the relationship. As stated earlier, other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness predicted personal resolution for participants who indicated that their relationship was over. This was not the case for participants who reported their relationship was worse, where there was no significance, nor for those who reported their relationship to be the same or better where only other-forgiveness predicted personal resolution. One possible explanation for this result is that participants whose relationship was over had some distance from the incident. As such, they were in a place where they could begin to question their own involvement in the relationship: to wonder how they ended up where they did and what part they played in the result. These participants also reported the longest time since the incident, which concurs with this notion. Given that these participants also experienced the greatest depth of injury (along with the relationship worse group), and the least personal resolution (along with the relationship worse group), an additional explanation for the self-forgiveness result is that they could no longer avoid looking at their own involvement in the incident. As Bauer et al. (1992) describe it, "the closer one gets to realizing how much one has hurt oneself or has been hurtful to others, the more one's sense of being 'bad' or 'wrong' intensifies. One often becomes preoccupied with the very wrongness of the precipitating event itself. One fears one's weakness will be discovered and desperately tries to fix the situation by oneself" (p. 154).

Like the relationship over group, participants who reported that their relationship was worse experienced the greatest depth of injury and the least personal resolution. Unlike the

relationship over group of participants, these participants did not have the same distance from the relationship. They were still in a relationship with the other party to the conflict, and their reported time since the incident was significantly shorter than that reported by the relationship over group. As such, it is likely that they were experiencing the aftermath or continuation of the conflict. I suspect these people were very focused on the behavior of the other person in the conflict, and were not likely in a place where they could yet think about forgiveness. Hence the results for self-forgiveness were non-significant.

The results for participants who reported that their relationship was the same or better indicated that only other-forgiveness predicted personal resolution. This result was curious in that I would have expected these participants to have taken responsibility for their behavior in the conflict, as indicated by a significant self-forgiveness predictor. A clue to what might have been going on for this group can be seen in the results of analysis based on the “who hurt you” criteria. When the injuring party was a friend, the results replicated those of the overall analysis with the main effects of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness predicting personal resolution. When the injuring party was a family member other-forgiveness was involved but there was also an interaction between self-forgiveness and conflict other-intensity. Respondents who reported high levels of other-intensity and high levels of self-forgiveness reported significantly higher levels of personal resolution than participants who reported high levels of other-intensity and low levels of self-forgiveness. This finding suggests that, in the realm of family conflict, it is in the context of intensity that self-forgiveness is chosen and this in turn leads to personal resolution. It is as if the participants were saying “what did I do to make them so upset?” coming to some conclusion about what they needed to take responsibility for in the conflict in the presence of the intensity of the other party to the conflict.

Returning to the current status of the relationship, it is possible that it was the mix of “who hurt you” (family or friend) that influenced the results of the relationship same or better analysis. A quick check of the data revealed that of the 54 participants who reported their relationship to be the same or better, 31 of the relationships were with a family member and 23 were with a friend, providing some support for this notion. Although not supportive of Hypothesis 1, this result indicates that conflict intensity does indeed play a role in interpersonal conflict, but that the role it plays is not as simple as hypothesized or as suggested in the literature (e.g., Hocker & Wilmot, 1991).

The results of the in-depth description analysis supported the relationship between other-forgiveness and personal resolution, and was in line with some of the existing literature (e.g., Enright et al., 1996). Support was not found for the influence of self-forgiveness on personal resolution. The method used to collect this data, that is, participants responding in writing to written questions, precluded the possibility of probing for more information or clarity. As such the information provided may have been lacking the depth needed to get a clear measure of self-forgiveness.

The in-depth description data itself was informative in that it clarified the nature of the decision phase in the forgiveness process. It indicated that choosing to forgive self or other is a decision or development point, and that very few of the participants were found to be at that stage—14 for other-forgiveness and 23 for self-forgiveness, out of 183 participants. It could be a stage that is very narrow in time frame, and from where one either cycles back to an earlier stage or forward to the working phase. Again, such a possibility is in line with the non-linear, cyclical nature of forgiveness described in the literature (e.g., Enright et al., 1996).

Given the limited involvement of conflict intensity in the results of the test of Hypothesis 1, the lack of support for Hypothesis 2 was not unexpected. Conflict intensity was not as influential in interpersonal conflict as I expected. The results indicated that conflict intensity played a subtler role in interpersonal conflict, with self-intensity and other-intensity impacting the results in different ways. Additionally, as indicated in the results of Hypothesis 1, the role of intensity seemed to be tied to whom the conflict is with, namely, a family member or friend. Intensity had an impact in family relationships but not with friends.

Regarding the instrument used to measure conflict intensity, it could be divided into self and other. Yet it may have been unable to pick up the nuances of the variable. For example, it is well known that avoidant behavior is often involved in conflict (e.g., Kilmann & Thomas, 1977). I suspect individuals who engaged in avoidant behavior would score low when describing their own behavior on the CIII. This tendency does not mean they were not involved in the conflict they described but rather that their behavior was not demonstrative and as such would not be measured by this instrument. One further issue with this instrument was reflected in feedback from a few non-Caucasian participants (in person to the researcher) who indicated that words such as “obstinate”, “vindictive”, and “ridicule” were difficult for them to understand. This difficulty with words may or may not have had an impact on the results obtained, as the number of participants who did not speak English as a first language was not recorded. Issues with the instrument aside, the results indicate that the relationship suggested in the existing literature, that other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness would predict personal resolution in situations of high conflict intensity (e.g., Hocker & Wilmot, 1991), may be too simplistic.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that high levels of self-forgiveness or other-forgiveness alone would predict false forgiveness under conditions of high levels of intensity, but this was not

supported. Other-forgiveness was the only predictor of false forgiveness in both the initial and in-depth description analyses. This finding was also the case for the analysis with self-intensity. In each case, higher levels of other-forgiveness were associated with lower levels of false forgiveness. Current status of the relationship seemed to have no impact on false forgiveness.

The other-intensity analysis produced different results in that self-forgiveness rather than other-forgiveness predicted false forgiveness. Higher levels of self-forgiveness predicted lower levels of false forgiveness. This finding was an interesting shift. The analysis with total intensity or self-intensity alone resulted with other-forgiveness predicting false forgiveness whereas the analysis with other-intensity alone resulted with self-forgiveness predicting false forgiveness. It is as if the type of forgiveness engaged in (self or other) depended on whose intensity was perceived to be the most salient. That is, when other-intensity was the most salient, participants who engaged in self-forgiveness reported lower levels of false forgiveness. When self-intensity was most salient, participants who engaged in other-forgiveness reported lower levels of false forgiveness.

These results do not support the relationship between other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and false-forgiveness as suggested in the literature (Ferrini, 1991; Flanigan, 1996; Safer, 1999). A possible explanation for this result can be found in the level of injury experienced by the participants of the current study. The work of Flanigan (1992, 1996) and Safer (1999) is based on extreme levels of injury (e.g., child abuse) whereas the injury experienced by the participants in the current study was more moderate. Support for this was found in the in-depth description data where participants described their conflict experience. For the most part, conflicts fell within the normal pattern for people in the age range of 18 to 25, such as dating difficulties and family squabbles. The results indicate that with a moderate level of injury the relationships

between the three variables are significantly more complex. It may be that high levels of forgiveness of self or other-forgiveness alone would predict low levels of false forgiveness under conditions of high levels of intensity, when the injury is of a more extreme nature.

As was the case with Hypothesis 1, analyzing the data based on who the other party was—family or friend—produced results different from the overall analysis. For those who reported being hurt by a family member, there were no significant predictors of false forgiveness whether the intensity variable was split into self and other or combined. For those who were hurt by a friend on the other hand, both other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness predicted false forgiveness when intensity was combined, as well as when it was split into self and other. Participants who reported higher levels of forgiveness, self or other, reported lower levels of false forgiveness. These results are curious, as participants seemed to be saying that false forgiveness did not play a role in conflict between family members, but that it did in conflict with friends. It may be that false forgiveness plays a role in relationships with friends, where keeping the present peace, and keeping the friendship, is felt to be more important or safer than dealing with the issue and potentially losing the friend. Within families, false forgiveness as defined here may play a minor role. It may very well be that forgetting the injuries inflicted by other family members is a coping strategy used to get by on a day-to-day basis.

How the “who hurt you” variable was divided into friends and family needs to be mentioned here as well, as it likely had an impact on the results. The friends designation included the same and opposite gender friendships. As such, romantic relationships, not including marriage, were included in this designation. Romantic relationships are in some ways rather different from platonic relationships. The sample size and distribution precluded any further division of participants’ scores on the “who hurt you” variable. Similarly, the family

designation included marriage relationships, which I suspect would be different from blood relations in various ways. Given these two potential confounds: the results may well be skewed. Again, the sample size and distribution precluded any further division of participants' scores on the "who hurt you" variable.

The non-significant results of the family group analysis were puzzling. Answers were found in the analysis of the two subscales that made up the false forgiveness scale—ALNOF and FFS. Results focusing on the ALNOF subscale differed from the overall false forgiveness results in that there was a significant 3-way interaction. Further, this interaction only held for the family designation and not for the friend. Further still, it only held for the family/self-intensity analysis. Participants who reported their own intensity and level of self-forgiveness as high, and their level of other-forgiveness as low scored significantly higher on attitudes leading to non-forgiveness than participants who reported their own intensity, self-forgiveness, and other-forgiveness as high. One interpretation is that these participants were letting themselves "off the hook" for a conflict in which they saw themselves as behaving in a highly intense manner, where they had not forgiven, and likely continued to blame the other party. That these participants had higher levels of attitudes leading to non-forgiveness is congruent with this interpretation. Another interpretation is that participants who had reported high levels of self-forgiveness, other-forgiveness, and self-intensity were closer to forgiving the other party than participants who reported high levels of self-forgiveness and self-intensity, but low levels of other-forgiveness, and as such reported lower levels of ALNOF.

The friend designation replicated the overall false forgiveness findings, with other-forgiveness being the only predictor. This finding changed again when other-intensity and self-intensity were analyzed separately. With friend/other-intensity it was other-forgiveness, self-

forgiveness, and other-intensity that predicted ALNOF. With friend/self-intensity, the intensity variable dropped out, resulting in a replication of the overall forgiveness/friend analysis.

Splitting intensity into other and self was informative because it highlighted the differences in participants' perspectives of their own and the other party's behavior(s) in the conflict. This difference in perspective is congruent with the findings in the attribution literature where it has been shown, for example, that people tend to attribute the actions of others to internal characteristics of that person and to situational factors for themselves (Jones & Nisbett, 1971).

The pattern of results of the FFS analysis seemed to follow those of the overall false forgiveness analysis. Other-forgiveness was the only significant predictor when other-intensity and self-intensity were run combined and separate in the overall analysis as well as with who hurt you-family. What is interesting is that the relationship between other-forgiveness and FFS was positive, the opposite of what one would expect. That is to say that increases in other-forgiveness were associated with increases in FFS. I address this issue presently.

The results of the separate analyses of the ALNOF and FFS scales explain the non-significant results of the initial family group analysis. Combining the results of the FFS family analysis with the results of the ALNOF family analysis may have served to cancel out any of the significant relationships. The relationship that the FFS analysis identified was in the opposite direction of the one that ALNOF identified. Thus, it was not that participants who reported being hurt by a family member did not engage in false forgiveness but that the combination of the two false forgiveness subscales masked the relationships between the variables.

Breaking down the in-depth description analysis of Hypothesis 3 further, the ALNOF scale analysis replicated the overall analysis results, where increases in other-forgiveness were associated with decreases in attitudes leading to non-forgiveness. The FFS results were not

significant. These results do not support the predicted relationships but they once more highlight differences in the two false forgiveness subscales. And so it appears that combining the two subscales is questionable at best.

The negative correlation between the two subscales of the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness scale (the overall false forgiveness scale) was curious. I was struck by how the ALNOF was the most descriptive of the three, and how the FFS seemed to mask the effect of ALNOF in the overall instrument, particularly since the direction of its relationship with the criterion variable was often opposite to that of ALNOF. This may be due to the orientation of the items in each subscale, which I address momentarily, when comparing the results of Hypothesis 3 and 4. What seems to be indicated in these results is that the focus of future research on the attitudes leading to not forgiving someone might be more fruitful than looking at false forgiveness as operationalized by the potential barriers to forgiveness scale.

To reiterate, the results of the tests of Hypothesis 3 did not support the relationship of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness and false-forgiveness suggested in the literature (Ferrini, 1991; Flanigan, 1996; Safer, 1999). The results also indicated that the relationships between these variables are significantly more complex based on who the conflict is with (family or friend), who the focus of intensity is on (self or other), the current state of the relationship (over, worse, or the same or better), and how one defines false forgiveness (ALNOF, FFS, or both combined).

Hypothesis 4 stated that the degree to which a person has been able to attain personal resolution would be negatively related to false forgiveness when conflict intensity was high. The initial results did not support the hypothesis and it seemed that conflict intensity did not play its expected role. The thinking behind Hypothesis 4 flowed directly from the first three hypotheses.

If personal resolution was related to other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness as predicted, then it should follow that false forgiveness would have an opposite relationship. If one were avoiding the other party to the conflict for example, or seeking to maintain or increase ones' personal power (Enright, Freedman, & Rique, 1998), the amount of personal resolution obtained would likely be lower than if one were not. Given the results of tests of Hypotheses 1 through 3, the lack of support here was not surprising.

The additional analyses again revealed some differences based on the focus of the intensity (self/other) and who the other party was (family/friend) and one pattern of results emerged. In all but one of the 18 analyses run for Hypothesis 4, either the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness (combined ALNOF and FFS) variable, or the ALNOF subscale, or both were significantly negatively correlated with personal resolution. Results of the one analysis where this was found not be the case, and a modicum of support for the hypothesis was found, was with participants who reported a conflict with a family member. For participants in this group who reported high levels of self-intensity, total false forgiveness and ALNOF were negatively correlated with personal resolution. For those who reported low levels of self-intensity, there where no significant relationships found. What this suggests is that only in familial interpersonal conflict, when a party perceives his/her own intensity to be low, is personal resolution not related to false forgiveness. This finding is significantly different from what was suggested by the first three hypotheses and the literature, and suggests that the negative relationship between false forgiveness and personal resolution is much more pervasive and not just limited to situations of high intensity. Again, within families, false forgiveness as defined here may play a minor role. It may very well be that forgetting the injuries inflicted by other family members is a coping

strategy used to get by on a day-to-day basis. An alternative approach to collecting data, such as grounded theory might have resulted in a vastly different understanding of false forgiveness.

The results indicated that a significant relationship between false forgiveness and personal resolution existed in most cases whether intensity was low or high. These results do not support the notion that false forgiveness might be used to just get on with life when intensity is low, and thus be positively related to personal resolution. People may use false forgiveness in low intensity conflict, but this data indicates that its usage will not likely lead to increases in levels of their personal resolution. These results indicate again that the relationship between personal resolution, conflict intensity, and false forgiveness is more complex than originally thought. Dynamics within families are different from dynamics between friends and investigating relational concepts with an amalgam of both types of relationships only serves to mask what is actually happening.

Another interesting relationship was uncovered in the results. FFS was positively related to personal resolution for participants who reported low other-intensity in a family relationship. That is to say, increases in FFS were associated with increases in personal resolution. It may be that this type of false forgiveness has a role in the family dynamic, where the relationship is not one of choice. When the intensity of the other person is low it may make sense to “forgive and forget”, to engage in false forgiveness as the investment of time and energy to achieve a better outcome may not be perceived to be worth it.

Turning specifically to the relationship between the ALNOF and FFS subscales sheds some further light on the hypothesis 3 and 4 results. Any correlations between ALNOF and FFS in hypothesis 4 that were significant were negative. That is to say increases in Attitudes Leading to Non-Forgiveness were related to decreases in the False Forgiveness subscale. This does not

make sense until one looks more closely at the items in each subscale. The ten items in the FFS scale all have a tendency towards accommodation, avoidance and minimization of the impact of the injury. These items indicate a willingness on the part of the injured party to overlook the injurious behavior of the other party and an unwillingness to engage in doing the work necessary to find personal resolution. In short, by agreeing with the statements it is apparent that one is meeting the other persons needs at the expense of one's own. The ALNOF items on the other hand, are more focused on the injury, its impact, and the likelihood of it being repeated. Here there is a sense of holding the injuring party responsible and not backing down for any reason. If the boat needs rocking, it will get rocked, even if in some cases that means sinking the boat. The two subscales have opposite focuses, thus the negative correlation.

These findings concur with what Case (1997) found in his initial testing of the scales. Further, he also found the ALNOF subscale to be positively correlated with fear of intimacy and negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction while finding no relationships between the FFS and these two constructs. This finding of Case (1999) also concurs with the present findings in that the ALNOF subscale was related to the constructs being tested more often than was FFS. For example, FFS was significant in only two of the 18 analyses in Hypothesis 4, whereas ALNOF was significant in 16 of the 18. This combination of results suggests that the concept of false forgiveness may be multi-faceted and the relationships between the different facets and other variables such as personal resolution are not straightforward. For example, the two aspects of false forgiveness investigated here relate to personal resolution in significantly different ways. Again, the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness scale items were focused on blame and accommodation/avoidance. There may be other aspects of false forgiveness in play, such as forgiveness that puts the person forgiving "one up" for example. Further, it may be that

compromise comes into play, with the individuals only forgiving for particular aspects of a conflict—a negotiated forgiveness.

Hypothesis 5 stated that at high levels of interaction intensity, forgiveness of self and other-forgiveness together would predict relationship satisfaction. That is, level of other-forgiveness or self-forgiveness alone would not predict relationship satisfaction. Results of the analyses did not support the hypothesis as they indicated that only other-forgiveness predicted relationship satisfaction. One pattern of results that was consistent across all of the tests of Hypothesis 5 was the main effect for other-forgiveness, which significantly predicted relationship satisfaction. In all cases, increases in other-forgiveness were associated with increases in relationship satisfaction. What this suggests is that other-forgiveness has a positive impact on the level of relationship satisfaction in interpersonal relationships, whether or not other variables are involved. This finding is to some degree supported by the literature that does not differentiate between forgiveness and reconciliation (e.g., Hargrave & Sells, 1997). To the degree that reconciliation is achieved it is likely that there will be greater relationship satisfaction.

Once more there were differences based on conflict reported with a friend versus a family member as well as self-intensity or other-intensity but due to the low overall number of subjects ($N = 118$) the results are less clear. In the additional analysis results, the 3-way interaction (other-forgiveness by self-forgiveness by conflict intensity) was significant for the other-intensity analysis, the who hurt you family analysis, and the who hurt you family/other-intensity analysis but the individual cell n 's were too small to have much faith in this result. For example, in the overall other-intensity analysis, which had an overall N of 118, one simple effects analysis cell had an n of 3. Further testing of this hypothesis with a larger sample is needed.

The in-depth description results also support the notion of other-forgiveness being related to relationship satisfaction but there were some additional significant findings as well. While all of the analyses identified that other-forgiveness was positively related to relationship satisfaction, the overall self-intensity analysis and the overall friend analysis added self-forgiveness, and the family/self-intensity analysis added self-intensity to the mix. The pattern is not clear and as such is somewhat puzzling.

Generally, what can be said about the tests of Hypothesis 5 is that the results indicate that other-forgiveness plays a major role, and that some differences seem to exist in the relationship between forgiveness (self and other), conflict intensity (self and other) and relationship satisfaction based on who the conflict is with—a family member or a friend. With friends it seems that it is other-forgiveness that predicts relationship satisfaction for the most part, and with family it is likely that other variables are also in play—how transparent or dysfunctional the family is for example. The inclusion of relationship satisfaction in the current study was not meant to bring the wealth of literature in that area to bear on the variables being tested, but to provide an initial sense of what the relationships might look like.

Hypothesis 6 stated that when interaction intensity was high, false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction would be negatively related. The idea was that the closer injured parties were to forgiving themselves for their part in the incident and the perpetrator for his/her part in the incident, the more satisfied they would be in the relationship, if that relationship still existed. This idea follows from the forgiveness literature (e.g., Enright et al., 1996; Flanigan, 1992) in that the greater the extent to which an individual has forgiven him or herself and the other party, the less likely he or she will be to continue to focus on the injury and the impact of it, a notion supported by Hypothesis 1 results. This process could open up the possibility of reconciliation,

which in turn might lead to higher levels of relationship satisfaction. This conception garnered some support, but only in the self-intensity/friend analysis. For participants in this group who reported high levels of self-intensity, higher levels of relationship satisfaction were associated with lower levels of attitudes leading to non-forgiveness. They were more satisfied when they let the friend “off the hook”. Participants in the self-intensity/friend group who reported low self-intensity did not show this tendency as for this group, no relationships were found.

There are two possible outcomes at lower levels of intensity. First, when intensity is low false forgiveness may be beneficial to the relationship. In this instance, infractions might more likely be judged as slight in nature, not worth the effort needed to engage in the forgiveness process, and as a result, let go. This suggests the possibility that forgiveness in this case may not be false, that other routes to “letting go” may exist. None-the-less, if infractions are not worth the effort there may be evidence of a positive relationship between false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction when intensity is low. Alternatively, other variables may have more influence on how satisfied individuals would be with their relationships at lower levels of intensity. In this instance, results of the analyses would show no significant relationships between false forgiveness and relationship satisfaction when intensity is low. Both of these notions received some support in the testing of Hypothesis 6. An explanation follows.

First, the notion that false forgiveness would be beneficial in low intensity conflict was supported by the results for participants who reported being hurt by a family member. In the low self-intensity situation with this group, attitudes leading to non-forgiveness increased as relationship satisfaction increased. In relationships with a family member, when participants perceived themselves as being engaged in a conflict only to a limited extent (low self intensity),

the more they were satisfied with the relationship, the higher their attitudes leading to non-forgiveness.

Second, the idea that other variables may have more influence on how satisfied individuals would be with their relationships at lower levels of intensity receives tentative support from the other-intensity analyses, overall, with family, and with friends. Support is tentative because all that is shown in the results is that false forgiveness is unrelated to relationship satisfaction. The influence of other variables is unknown.

These relationship satisfaction results suggest that the two different results with low intensity may be operating concurrently. That is, false forgiveness may play a role in interpersonal conflict in regards to levels of self-intensity in family relationships and that variables other than false forgiveness may play a role in interpersonal conflict in regards to other-intensity.

Two comments are in order. First, false forgiveness as operationalized by the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness scale did not refer to a specific incident, as did the other instruments included in the package. The items within the scale refer in general to the different aspects of false forgiveness. As such, false forgiveness as measured here may not have been as clearly connected to the conflict incident participants were thinking about as the other variables being measured were. This would likely have some impact on the relationships between false forgiveness and the other variables in question found in this research endeavor. What that impact might be is unknown. Secondly, in speculating about the influence of other variables on relationship satisfaction I am left pondering about the make-up of relationship satisfaction. Some people may be satisfied with a relationship "until a better one comes along". Other people might only be satisfied when differences and conflicts are completely resolved. What this

suggests is that there is a range of relationship satisfaction, and that it likely means different things to different people. This different meaning may very well have influenced the results.

The relationship between the ALNOF and FFS subscales in the relationship satisfaction data set ($N = 118$) replicated the relationship found in the larger dataset. Any correlations between these two variables that were significant were negative. That is to say increases in attitude leading to non-forgiveness were related to decreases in the false forgiveness subscale. Again this is likely due to the content of each of the subscales. These results put into question the value of combining the two subscales into a total false forgiveness scale and indicates a need for further refinement of the overall false forgiveness construct, particularly in the realm of family conflict.

Patterns Identified Across Hypotheses.

The first patterns identified were the impact of who the other party to the conflict was (family or friend) and focus of intensity (self or other) on the results. Regarding relationship to the other party, it was quite obvious in this data that relationships with friends differed significantly from relationships with family members and that the latter were more complex. For example, in Hypotheses 1, 3, and 5 the only results in which interaction effects were identified were within relationships with a family member. For participants who reported on relationships with friends only main effects were significant. These results suggest that in the future, researchers should not combine these two groups when investigating conflict related issues. The relationship of variables is different and combining the two only serves to mask results.

Regarding the focus of intensity, it really makes intuitive sense (after the fact) that self-intensity and other-intensity would relate in different ways to the variables under investigation. To be honest, I was questioning the viability of looking at intensity as a single item in

interpersonal conflict as I collected the data. I suspect using intensity as a single variable may make more sense when dealing with group level conflicts because in that case one is dealing with an aggregate, and the focus is not on the individuals and their internal thought processes but on the group. Another aspect of intensity as it was measured in the current endeavor was that it consisted of the perspective of only one of the parties to the conflict. Having both parties fill out the intensity instrument would add additional information as it would offer the possibility of a composite score, as well as the two individual perspectives. This would also provide the opportunity to examine the parties' respective ladders of inference (Argyrus, 1982). Coding the in-depth description data for other-intensity and self-intensity could also provide additional data.

Another identified pattern had to do with the false forgiveness measure. It seems that of the two subscales, the attitudes leading to non-forgiveness (ALNOF) subscale was significantly more descriptive than the false forgiveness subscale (FFS). For the most part if a significant result was obtained it was ALNOF that was related to the variable being studied. For example, in the correlational analyses of Hypothesis 4 and 6, only three of the combined total of 36 analyses resulted in significant results for FFS and these three results were not in a predicted direction. As mentioned earlier, I suspect the orientation of the false forgiveness subscale items contributed to the lack of or opposite results of the FFS. These results suggest that false forgiveness, as defined by the false forgiveness subscale is only related to personal resolution and relationship satisfaction in a limited way, and that further understanding of the two subscales and the overall concept of false forgiveness is necessary. Again, this may be do how false forgiveness was operationalized in the present research.

One potential avenue to investigate might be the relationship of ALNOF and FFS to the Thomas Kilmann classification of conflict styles (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977) given that the

ALNOF seems to be related to the competitive style (i.e., “I will not back down”) and the FFS seems to be related to accommodating and avoidant styles. It might be fruitful to investigate the potential relationships between the other two styles (collaborate and compromise) and false forgiveness. Further testing of the Potential Barriers to Forgiveness Scale in combination with other measures such as the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode instrument (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977) will hopefully provide the opportunity to assess these relationships.

Implications for the Model

The placement of other-forgiveness, self-forgiveness, conflict intensity, and false forgiveness within the proposed model was supported by the results of this research. The role of conflict intensity was more complex than initially proposed, and the relationships between the variables changed based on whether the other party was a family member or a friend and on whether the relationship was over, in a worse state, or the same or better than before. These results suggest a couple of revisions to the model. First, two variables need to be added, namely, type of relationship (friend or family), and current relationship state. The type of relationship variable is interpersonal in nature, and relates to the context within which the conflict is taking place. As such it is added to the interpersonal component of the context dimension. Current relationship state was also seen to influence the results of hypothesis testing, and also takes place in the interpersonal context. As such it too is added to the interpersonal context component of the model.

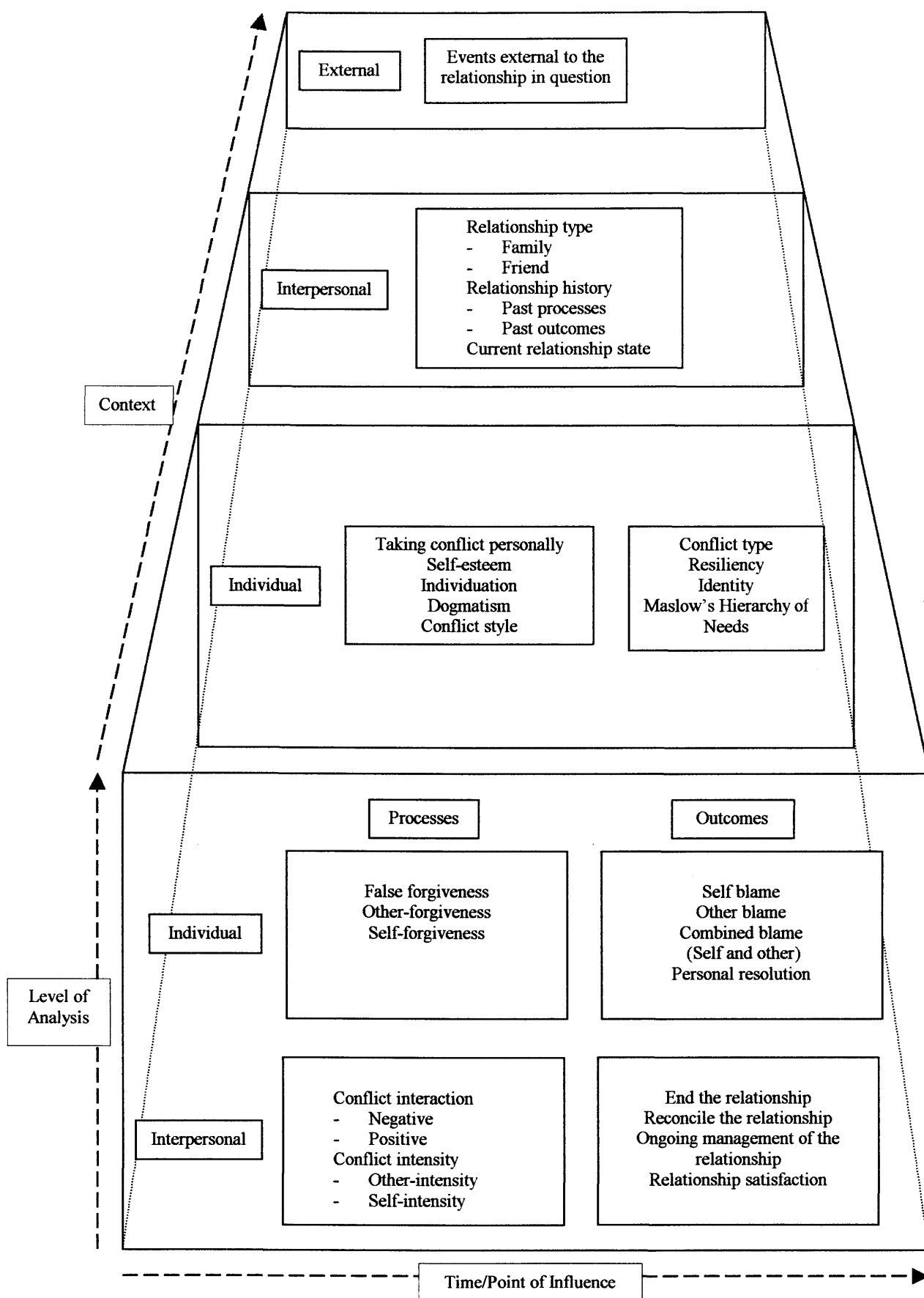
Secondly, the results of the present research indicate that interpersonal conflict intensity variable be best treated as having two components, namely, self-intensity and other-intensity. Treating this variable as having only one dimension in the context of interpersonal conflict results in the loss of valuable information. Lastly, a variable that was included in the present

research but was not part of the original model is relationship satisfaction. Given the relational outcome nature of the variable, it is added to the interpersonal outcome component of the model. The revised model can be seen in Figure 2.

A question that remains is: are there any variables that are not included in the model at present that should be? As stated earlier, the model as presented is not expected to be comprehensive. At the same time there are a number of variables that come to mind. For example: given that much of my thinking about personal resolution and about people getting themselves unstuck arose from my experience in workplace conflict, work relationships need to be added to the relationship type variable in the interpersonal context component (i.e., relationship type: family, friend, work). I would expect interpersonal conflict dynamics in the workplace to be different from those with family or friends, as typical employer expectations include that employees need not like each other, but that they interact appropriately with each other in the workplace. This would provide a different context and as such would likely mean that different constructs would also come into play.

A second example of an additional variable is depression. Its placement in the model would depend on whether the impact of the depression was due to a person's experienced outcome of a negative conflict interaction (the individual outcome component), or due to being a part of the individuals' past life experience (the individual context component), or both. These are but a few examples of variables that potentially have a place in the model. Further research is needed to flesh out the relationships between the variables and identify others that may be missing.

Figure 2: Integrative Model of Forgiveness and Interpersonal Conflict - Revised



Conclusion

This research endeavor set out with two goals. The first of these goals was to bring together two areas of research by creating an integrative model, and the second was to begin testing the relationships between a limited number of the variables to see if there was support for their placement within the model. The results did not support the relationships as hypothesized but showed that relationships between the variables did in fact exist, and therefore it is concluded that their inclusion in the model was appropriate. Bringing the forgiveness and interpersonal conflict literatures together was a novel idea and as such the lack of support for the relationships as hypothesized was not a great surprise. At the same time some initial light was shed on the relationships and there is ample opportunity for future research.

The results of the present study have identified a number of directions for future research. First, the concepts of self-forgiveness, false forgiveness, and personal resolution need to be further clarified and expanded, and the measures to assess their relationships to other variables rigorously refined and tested. Second, the relationships between the variables in the model need to be tested with either a large enough number of participants such that relationship types could be reliably compared, or with a focus on one particular type of relationship. This addition would ensure a clearer understanding of the influence of relationship type on interpersonal conflict and forgiveness processes. Third, the relationship satisfaction literature needs to be explored and incorporated in a more thorough way such that the impact of the other model variables on relationships might be better understood. Lastly, the relationship between forgiveness, personal resolution and relationship outcomes (over, managed, or resolved) needs further exploration. This is particularly so given that some definitions of forgiveness in the literature include reconciliation and some do not.

One further thought: given the difficulties encountered with instruments in this research it would likely be fruitful in future research on the model, as well as components therein, to take a qualitative approach such as grounded theory. This would provide the opportunity to build the concepts from the ground up, without preconceived notions of what the variables should look like. Time pressures with the current research precluded the opportunity for doing so.

Further clarification of the relationships between variables in the model will offer additional alternatives to those who work in the field of interpersonal conflict. These alternatives might provide insights and lead to the development of tools for loosening the strangle hold that the past can have on the present for people experiencing interpersonal conflict, a first step in ultimately breaking the conflict cycle.

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Appendix A

Instruments

Conflict Interaction Intensity Scale

Think for a moment about the behaviors you and the person engaged in, and then answer the following questions.

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|----|--|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | I was vindictive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | The other person was vindictive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | I insulted the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | The other person insulted me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | I tried to manipulate the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | The other person tried to manipulate me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | I was critical of the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | The other person was critical of me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | I was sarcastic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | The other person was sarcastic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | I was close-minded | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | The other person was close-minded | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13 | I ridiculed the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | The other person ridiculed me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | I was obstinate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | The other person was obstinate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI)

This instrument has been excluded by the request of the creators of the scale. Examples of the items follow.

Affective Component:

- I feel caring toward him/her
- I feel bitter toward him/her

Behavioral Component:

- Regarding the other person I do or would avoid him/her
- Regarding the other person I do or would be biting when talking with him/her

Cognitive Component

- I think he or she is dreadful
- Regarding the other person, I hope he/she does well in life

Enright Forgiveness Inventory—Self-Forgiveness (EFI-S)

Given the similarity between this instrument and the EFI, it has been excluded as well. Examples of the items follow.

Affective Component:

- I feel caring toward myself
- I feel bitter toward myself

Cognitive Component

- I think I am dreadful
- Regarding myself, I have put the problem behind me

Personal Resolution Scale

Please answer the following in regard to the conflict you have been thinking about.

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|----|---|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | I continue to think about the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | The incident continues to distress me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | I feel wounded by the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | I blame the other party for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | I blame myself for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | I currently resent the person who hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7* | Harm is an ever present possibility | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

*Item 7 was dropped from the analysis.

False Forgiveness Scale

Attitudes Leading to Non Forgiveness

When it comes to forgiving other people:

| | | Strongly Disagree 1 | Disagree 2 | Slightly Disagree 3 | Slightly Agree 4 | Agree 5 | Strongly Agree 6 |
|----|---|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| 1 | I avoid forgiving some people because I don't want to condone or accept their hurtful actions | | | | | | |
| 2 | Sometimes I don't forgive people because I can still remember the hurtful things they did to me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | I think forgiving people only makes it more likely that they will hurt you again | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | I think some people do not deserve to be forgiven because they aren't willing to apologize | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | I will not forgive someone unless they do something to make up for their mistake | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | I try to be forgiving of people even when they are not sorry about what they have done to hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | When I forgive somebody for a mistake, I feel like they owe me a favor | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | I usually expect to get my way for a while after having forgiven someone for his/her mistakes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | Sometimes I hold onto grudges because the person who hurt me doesn't seem to feel bad about it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | I think some people don't deserve to be forgiven because of the seriousness of their mistakes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | I would forgive loved ones even though it's no longer safe to interact with them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | I am not willing to forgive someone who shows no regret for having hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | I think to forgive someone is like saying they can do it again and get away with it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | I don't think it is possible to have truly forgiven someone until the pain from what they did is gone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | I think forgiving is too much like saying what someone did to hurt you is alright | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

False Forgiveness Subscale

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | I think it is important to forgive right away because that is the right (moral) thing to do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17 | I try and forgive others as soon as possible so as to avoid conflict | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18 | I think forgiving means being willing to stay in a relationship with someone no matter what | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19 | Because it is a commandment of God, I think people should be forgiving even when they don't feel like it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20 | Sometimes I have to ignore my own feelings to forgive those who have hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 21 | I often swallow my pride and forgive people even though I am still angry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 22 | I think forgiving others is a good way to show them how to act like adults | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 23 | I forgive people mostly because it is the right (moral) thing to do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 24 | I think if somebody has forgiven someone for something, they should forget the thing the person did | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 25 | Saying "I forgive you" to a loved one means being willing to give him/her another chance no matter what | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Appendix B

Instrument Package

(EFI and EFI-S items have been removed)

Attitude Scale

We sometimes experience conflict with people we are in a close relationship with, such as family members or friends. This can sometimes include being unfairly hurt by the other person we are in conflict with. We now ask you to think of your most recent conflict experience where someone close to you hurt you unfairly and deeply. For a few moments, visualize in your mind the events of that interaction. Try to see the person and try to experience what happened.

How deeply were you hurt

when the incident occurred?
(circle one)
deal

| | | | | |
|------|----------|------|------|---------|
| No | A little | Some | Much | A great |
| hurt | hurt | hurt | hurt | of hurt |

Who hurt you?
(Circle one)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|--------|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| Son | Daughter | Sister | brother | Spouse | Parent |
| Friend of Same Gender | | | Friend of Opposite Gender | | |

Other (specify) _____

Is the person living? Yes No
(Circle one)

How long ago did this hurtful event happen? (Please write in the number of days or weeks etc.)

_____ days ago _____ months ago

_____ weeks ago _____ years ago

What is your age? _____ What is your gender? _____

On the next few pages, please describe what happened in as much detail as you feel comfortable with.

What the other person say or do to you?

What did you say or do to the other person?

How do you feel about the other person as a result of the conflict

How do you feel about yourself as a result of the conflict?

What do you think about the other person as a result of the conflict?

What do you think about yourself as a result of the conflict?

What affect has the conflict had on the relationship?

Now, please answer a series of questions about the conflict situation and your current attitude toward the person. We do not want your rating of past attitudes, but your ratings of attitudes right now. All responses are confidential so please answer honestly. Thank you.

Think for a moment about the behaviors you and the person engaged in, and then answer the following questions.

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|----|--|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | I was vindictive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | the other person was vindictive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | I insulted the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | the other person insulted me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | I tried to manipulate the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | the other person tried to manipulate me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | I was critical of the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | the other person was critical of me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | I was sarcastic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | the other person was sarcastic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | I was close-minded | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | the other person was close-minded | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13 | I ridiculed the other person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | the other person ridiculed me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | I was obstinate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | the other person was obstinate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

17 On a scale of 1 to 10, one being absolutely calm, feeling no anxiety at all, and 10 being the worst anxiety you can imagine feeling, how do you rate yourself at this moment? Please circle the number that best represents how you feel right now.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|--|---------|
| Calm | | | | | | | | | | | Anxious |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | |

The EFI and EFI-S have been removed by request.

Please answer the following in regard to the conflict you have been thinking about.

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----|---|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 118 | I continue to think about the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 119 | The incident continues to distress me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 120 | I feel wounded by the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 121 | I blame the other party for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 122 | I blame myself for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 123 | I currently resent the person who hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 124 | Harm is an ever present possibility | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

When it comes to forgiving other people:

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----|---|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 133 | I avoid forgiving some people because I don't want to condone or accept their hurtful actions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 134 | Sometimes I don't forgive people because I can still remember the hurtful things they did to me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 135 | I think forgiving people only makes it more likely that they will hurt you again | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 136 | I think some people do not deserve to be forgiven because they aren't willing to apologize | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 137 | I will not forgive someone unless they do something to make up for their mistake | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 138 | I try to be forgiving of people even when they are not sorry about what they have done to hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 139 | When I forgive somebody for a mistake, I feel like they owe me a favor | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 140 | I usually expect to get my way for a while after having forgiven someone for his/her mistakes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 141 | Sometimes I hold onto grudges because the person who hurt me doesn't seem to feel bad about it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 142 | I think some people don't deserve to be forgiven because of the seriousness of their mistakes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 143 | I would forgive loved ones even though it's no longer safe to interact with them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 144 | I am not willing to forgive someone who shows no regret for having hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 145 | I think to forgive someone is like saying they can do it again and get away with it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 146 | I don't think it is possible to have truly forgiven someone until the pain from what they did is gone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 147 | I think forgiving is too much like saying what someone did to hurt you is alright | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 148 | I think it is important to forgive right away because that is the right (moral) thing to do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 149 | I try and forgive others as soon as possible so as to avoid conflict | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 150 | I think forgiving means being willing to stay in a relationship with someone no matter what | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 151 | Because it is a commandment of God, I think people should be forgiving even when they don't feel like it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 152 | Sometimes I have to ignore my own feelings to forgive those who have hurt me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 153 | I often swallow my pride and forgive people even though I am still angry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 154 | I think forgiving others is a good way to show them how to act like adults | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 155 | I forgive people mostly because it is the right (moral) thing to do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 156 | I think if somebody has forgiven someone for something, they should forget the thing the person did | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 157 | Saying "I forgive you" to a loved one means being willing to give him/her another chance no matter what | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

160 On a scale of 1 to 10, one being absolutely calm, feeling no anxiety at all, and 10 being the worst anxiety you can imagine feeling, how do you rate yourself at this moment? Please circle the number that best represents how you feel right now.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---------|
| Calm | | | | | | | | | | | Anxious |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix C
Descriptive Statistics and
Correlation Matrices

[illegible]

TABLE 2. Descriptive Statistics Relationship Satisfaction Dataset

[illegible]

Table C3: Correlations Total Dataset (N = 183)

| | How Deeply Were You Hurt | Age | Gender | Time Since Incident | Conflict Intensity | Other- Intensity | Other- Intensity | Other- Forgiveness | Self- Forgiveness |
|--|--------------------------------|---------|--------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| How Deeply Were You Hurt | 1.000 | .094 | .173* | .184** | .066 | .008 | .106 | -.119 | .044 |
| Age | .094 | 1.000 | -.079 | .213** | .107 | -.019 | .175* | -.026 | .121 |
| Gender | .173* | -.079 | 1.000 | -.184** | .154* | .133 | .132 | -.079 | .138* |
| Time Since Incident | .184* | .213* | -.184* | 1.000 | .210** | .135* | .203** | -.075 | .093 |
| Conflict Intensity | .066 | .107 | .154* | .210** | 1.000 | .843** | .820** | -.072 | .058 |
| Self-Intensity | .008 | -.019 | .133 | .135* | .843** | 1.000 | .383** | .158* | .048 |
| Other- Intensity | .106 | .175* | .132 | .203** | .820** | .383** | 1.000 | -.283* | .042 |
| Other- Forgiveness | -.119 | -.026 | -.079 | -.075 | -.072 | .158* | -.283** | 1.000 | .149* |
| Self- Forgiveness | .044 | .121 | .138* | .093 | .058 | .048 | .042 | .149* | 1.000 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | -.111 | .021 | .046 | -.001 | .173* | .233** | .041 | .339* | .241** |
| Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | -.123* | .012 | .032 | .014 | .170* | .225** | .044 | .344** | .234** |
| In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | -.071 | -.017 | .008 | .067 | .041 | .161* | -.092 | .535** | .178** |
| In-Depth Description Self- Forgiveness | .039 | .142* | .130* | .202** | .196* | .170* | .150* | .139* | .210** |
| Current Relationship State | -.143* | -.125 | .007 | -.147* | .040 | .193** | -.128 | .630** | .028 |
| False Forgiveness | -.032 | -.295** | -.067 | -.020 | .070 | .092 | .024 | -.192** | -.199** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | -.002 | -.230** | .019 | -.018 | .017 | .023 | -.001 | -.358** | -.141* |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | -.061 | -.121 | -.131* | -.009 | .090 | .111 | .049 | .231** | -.105 |
| Personal Resolution | -.206* | .049 | -.032 | .154* | -.109 | .019 | -.209** | .426** | .281** |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table C3 (Continued): Correlations Total Dataset (N = 183)

| | Relationship Satisfaction | Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | In-Depth Description Self- Forgiveness | Current Relationship State | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale | Personal Resolution |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| How Deeply Were You Hurt | -.111 | -.123 | -.071 | .039 | -.143* | -.032 | -.002 | -.061 | -.206** |
| Age | .021 | .012 | -.017 | .142* | -.125 | -.295** | -.230** | -.121 | .049 |
| Gender | .046 | .032 | .008 | .130 | .007 | -.067 | .019 | -.131* | -.032 |
| Time Since Incident | -.001 | .014 | .067 | .202** | -.147* | -.020 | -.018 | -.009 | .154* |
| Conflict Intensity | .173* | .170* | .041 | .196** | .040 | .070 | .017 | .090 | -.109 |
| Self-Intensity | .233** | .225** | .161* | .170* | .193** | .092 | .023 | .111 | .019 |
| Other- Intensity | .041 | .044 | -.092 | .150* | -.128 | .024 | -.001 | .049 | -.209** |
| Other- Forgiveness | .339** | .344** | .535** | .139* | .630** | -.192** | -.358** | .231** | .426** |
| Self- Forgiveness | .241** | .234** | .178** | .210** | .028 | -.199** | -.141* | -.105 | .281** |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 1.000 | .993** | .354** | .200** | .322** | -.044 | -.033 | -.038 | .468** |
| Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | .993** | 1.000 | .337** | .188** | .325** | -.031 | -.027 | -.029 | .473** |
| In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | .354** | .337** | 1.000 | .473** | .497** | -.241** | -.343** | .134* | .421** |
| In-Depth Description Self- Forgiveness | .200** | .188** | .473** | 1.000 | .173** | -.195** | -.148* | -.074 | .239** |
| Current Relationship State | .322** | .325** | .497** | .173* | 1.000 | -.083 | -.140* | .081 | .315** |
| False Forgiveness | -.044 | -.031 | -.241** | -.195** | -.083 | 1.000 | .795** | .388** | -.259** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | -.033 | -.027 | -.343** | -.148* | -.140* | .795** | 1.000 | -.249** | -.274** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | -.038 | -.029 | .134* | -.074 | .081 | .388** | -.249** | 1.000 | .004 |
| Personal Resolution | .468** | .473** | .421** | .239** | .315** | -.259** | -.274** | .004 | 1.000 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table C4: Correlations: Relationship Satisfaction Dataset (N = 118)

| | How Deeply Were You Hurt | Age | Gender | Time Since Incident | Conflict Intensity | Self-Intensity | Other- Intensity | Other- Forgiveness | Self- Forgiveness | Relationship Satisfaction |
|--|--------------------------------|--------|--------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| How Deeply Were You Hurt | 1.000 | .073 | .138 | .139 | .030 | -.058 | .116 | -.123 | -.061 | -.174* |
| Age | .073 | 1.000 | -.141 | .203* | .116 | .016 | .174* | .000 | .045 | -.008 |
| Gender | .138 | -.141 | 1.000 | -.231* | .202* | .171* | .173* | -.005 | .147 | .071 |
| Time Since Incident | .139 | .203* | -.231* | 1.000 | .106 | .104 | .074 | .069 | -.086 | .109 |
| Conflict Intensity | .030 | .116 | .202* | .106 | 1.000 | .855** | .847** | .096 | .071 | .173* |
| Self-Intensity | -.058 | .016 | .171* | .104 | .855** | 1.000 | .449** | .311** | .104 | .295** |
| Other-Intensity | .116 | .174* | .173* | .074 | .847** | .449** | 1.000 | -.149 | .022 | -.002 |
| Other- Forgiveness | -.123 | .000 | -.005 | .069 | .096 | .311** | -.149 | 1.000 | .376** | .550** |
| Self-Forgiveness | -.061 | .045 | .147 | -.086 | .071 | .104 | .022 | .376** | 1.000 | .232** |
| Relationship Satisfaction | -.174* | -.008 | .071 | .109 | .173* | .295** | -.002 | .550** | .232** | 1.000 |
| Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | .195* | -.015 | -.051 | -.131 | -.171* | -.267** | -.023 | -.479** | -.205* | -.943** |
| In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | -.115 | -.132 | -.029 | .197* | .118 | .246** | -.046 | .515** | .232** | .491** |
| In-Dept Description Self- Forgiveness | -.016 | .047 | .036 | .366** | .173* | .202* | .088 | .288** | .142 | .216** |
| Current Relationship State | -.149 | -.167* | .065 | .087 | .169* | .302** | -.024 | .422** | .173* | .379** |
| False Forgiveness | -.037 | -.194* | -.102 | .010 | .052 | .092 | -.015 | -.144 | -.253** | -.013 |
| Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | -.014 | -.222* | -.047 | -.024 | -.079 | -.047 | -.094 | -.304** | -.205* | -.053 |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | -.054 | .035 | -.073 | .043 | .193* | .201* | .121 | .201* | -.082 | .019 |
| Personal Resolution | -.333** | -.016 | .054 | .176* | -.050 | .104 | -.189* | .451** | .260** | .505** |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table C4: Correlations (Continued): Relationship Satisfaction Dataset (N = 118)

| | Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | In-Depth Description Self- Forgiveness | Current Relationship State | False Forgiveness | Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | False Forgiveness Subscale | Personal Resolution |
|--|---|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| How Deeply Were You Hurt | .195* | -.115 | -.016 | -.149 | -.037 | -.014 | -.054 | -.333** |
| Age | -.015 | -.132 | .047 | -.167* | -.194* | -.222* | .035 | -.016 |
| Gender | -.051 | -.029 | .036 | .065 | -.102 | -.047 | -.073 | .054 |
| Time Since Incident | -.131 | .197* | .366** | .087 | .010 | -.024 | .043 | .176* |
| Conflict Intensity | -.171* | .118 | .173* | .169* | .052 | -.079 | .193* | -.050 |
| Self-Intensity | -.267** | .246** | .202* | .302** | .092 | -.047 | .201* | .104 |
| Other-Intensity | -.023 | -.046 | .088 | -.024 | -.015 | -.094 | .121 | -.189* |
| Other- Forgiveness | -.479** | .515** | .288** | .422** | -.144 | -.304** | .201* | .451** |
| Self-Forgiveness | -.205* | .232** | .142 | .173* | -.253** | -.205* | -.082 | .260** |
| Relationship Satisfaction | -.943** | .491** | .216** | .379** | -.013 | -.053 | .019 | .505** |
| Transformed Relationship Satisfaction | 1.000 | -.405** | -.188* | -.330** | -.026 | .016 | -.008 | -.475** |
| In-Depth Description Other- Forgiveness | -.405** | 1.000 | .596** | .455** | -.231** | -.318** | .098 | .456** |
| In-Dept Description Self- Forgiveness | -.188* | .596 | 1.000 | .387** | -.260** | -.254** | -.011 | .300** |
| Current Relationship State | -.330** | .455** | .387** | 1.000 | -.078 | -.112 | .034 | .432** |
| False Forgiveness | -.026 | -.231** | -.260** | -.078 | 1.000 | .771** | .406** | -.223** |
| Attitudes Leading to Non- Forgiveness | .016 | -.318** | -.254** | -.112 | .771** | 1.000 | -.269** | -.249** |
| False Forgiveness Subscale | -.008 | .098 | -.011 | .034 | .406** | -.269** | 1.000 | .018 |
| Personal Resolution | -.475* | .456** | .300** | .432** | -.223** | -.249* | .018 | 1.000 |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Appendix D
**Factor Structures for Personal Resolution Scale
and Enright Forgiveness Inventory—Self**

Personal Resolution: 1 Factor Solution

Factor Matrix

| | Factor |
|---------|--------|
| | 1 |
| PRES119 | .874 |
| PRES118 | .809 |
| PRES120 | .800 |
| PRES123 | .548 |
| PRES121 | |
| PRES122 | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
1 factor extracted. 7 iterations required.

EFI-S Factor Analysis: One Factor Solution

Rotated Factor Matrix

| | Factor 1 |
|---------|-------------|
| EFIS91 | .733 |
| EFIS78 | .727 |
| EFIS96 | .726 |
| EFIS94 | .703 |
| EFIS92 | .685 |
| EFIS93 | .683 |
| EFIS81 | .681 |
| EFIS80 | .679 |
| EFIS83 | .659 |
| EFIS90 | .647 |
| EFIS79 | .640 |
| EFIS86 | .640 |
| EFIS103 | .639 |
| EFIS84 | .638 |
| EFIS88 | .631 |
| EFIS105 | .628 |
| EFIS82 | .627 |
| EFIS102 | .620 |
| EFIS95 | .614 |
| EFIS97 | .607 |
| EFIS85 | .600 |
| EFIS101 | .598 |
| EFIS113 | .586 |
| EFIS89 | .585 |
| EFIS87 | .580 |
| EFIS110 | .575 |
| EFIS107 | .552 |
| EFIS100 | .546 |
| EFIS104 | .532 |
| EFIS108 | .520 |
| EFIS115 | .509 |
| EFIS111 | .474 |
| EFIS106 | .448 |
| EFIS98 | .424 |
| EFIS109 | .415 |
| EFIS117 | .410 |
| EFIS99 | |
| EFIS116 | |
| EFIS112 | |
| EFIS114 | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
1 factor extracted. 3 iterations required.

EFI-S Factor Analysis: 2 Factor Solution

Rotated Factor Matrix

| | Factor | |
|---------|--------|------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| EFIS94 | .875 | |
| EFIS83 | .846 | |
| EFIS95 | .811 | |
| EFIS81 | .805 | |
| EFIS80 | .796 | |
| EFIS88 | .793 | |
| EFIS96 | .782 | |
| EFIS78 | .779 | |
| EFIS84 | .760 | |
| EFIS92 | .755 | |
| EFIS91 | .527 | .504 |
| EFIS79 | .463 | .437 |
| EFIS89 | .462 | |
| EFIS90 | .458 | .453 |
| EFIS87 | .424 | |
| EFIS117 | | |
| EFIS116 | | |
| EFIS103 | | .776 |
| EFIS110 | | .746 |
| EFIS100 | | .738 |
| EFIS102 | | .653 |
| EFIS106 | | .625 |
| EFIS115 | | .589 |
| EFIS105 | | .588 |
| EFIS107 | | .586 |
| EFIS111 | | .584 |
| EFIS98 | | .562 |
| EFIS109 | | .555 |
| EFIS108 | | .551 |
| EFIS104 | | .539 |
| EFIS86 | | .525 |
| EFIS101 | | .523 |
| EFIS93 | .450 | .515 |
| EFIS113 | | .492 |
| EFIS97 | | .462 |
| EFIS82 | .424 | .461 |
| EFIS99 | | .440 |
| EFIS85 | .417 | .427 |
| EFIS112 | | |
| EFIS114 | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

EFI-S Factor Analysis: 4 Factor Solution

Rotated Factor Matrix

| | Factor | | | |
|---------|--------|------|------|------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| EFIS94 | .834 | | | |
| EFIS95 | .832 | | | |
| EFIS83 | .796 | | | |
| EFIS80 | .796 | | | |
| EFIS88 | .781 | | | |
| EFIS81 | .777 | | | |
| EFIS96 | .768 | | | |
| EFIS78 | .758 | | | |
| EFIS92 | .737 | | | |
| EFIS84 | .736 | | | |
| EFIS116 | | | | |
| EFIS111 | | .784 | | |
| EFIS102 | | .781 | | |
| EFIS108 | | .699 | | |
| EFIS110 | | .697 | | |
| EFIS100 | | .695 | | |
| EFIS103 | | .658 | .417 | |
| EFIS107 | | .645 | | |
| EFIS104 | | .641 | | |
| EFIS106 | | .567 | | |
| EFIS101 | | .537 | | |
| EFIS115 | | .490 | .407 | |
| EFIS109 | | .448 | | |
| EFIS117 | | | | |
| EFIS112 | | | | |
| EFIS89 | | | .727 | |
| EFIS93 | | | .721 | |
| EFIS87 | | | .688 | |
| EFIS82 | | | .660 | |
| EFIS91 | | | .658 | |
| EFIS97 | | | .655 | |
| EFIS79 | | | .641 | |
| EFIS86 | | | .628 | |
| EFIS90 | | | .578 | |
| EFIS85 | | | .551 | |
| EFIS105 | | | .475 | |
| EFIS113 | | | | |
| EFIS99 | | | | .594 |
| EFIS98 | | | | .556 |
| EFIS114 | | | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Appendix E

Coding Schemes for In-Depth Description Data

Coding Scheme for Other-forgiveness and Self Forgiveness

Although my review of the forgiveness literature identified three general stages or steps in the other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness processes, an initial reading of the written descriptions provided by participants identified a need for more than three stages. What became clear was that the four steps outlined by Enright et al. (1996) for other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness were a close fit and needed only one additional step (see Table 3).

The additional step was identified as a pre-uncovering phase. Here the individual does not mention the need to forgive self or other. The other party is seen to be completely at fault and there is no acknowledgement of the amount of energy being consumed by focusing on the incident. There is little or no awareness, realization, or insight associated with the incident. Enright et al.'s (1996) description of self-forgiveness identifies denial as a part of the Uncovering Phase (Step 1). In the present coding scheme this was included in the pre-uncovering stage.

In creating the other-forgiveness coding scheme I used Flanigan's (1992) work to further flesh out the five steps. With the self-forgiveness coding scheme the Flanigan (1996) and Bauer et al. (1992) descriptions were incorporated where they informed the process. The two schemes can be seen in Table E1.

Table E1
Other-Forgiveness and Self-Forgiveness Coding Schemes

Other-Forgiveness

Step 1:

Pre-Uncovering Phase

- No exploration of the injury
- No admittance or awareness of change of any sort
- No insights or realizations

Step 2:

Uncovering Phase

- Examination of psychological defenses
- Confrontation of anger
- Admittance of shame
- Awareness of cathexis
- Awareness of cognitive rehearsal of offence
- Insight that injured party may be comparing self with the injurer
- Realization that oneself may be permanently and adversely changed by the injury
- Insight into possibly altered "just world" view

Phases 1 through 4 of Flanigan (1992)

- Naming
- Claiming
- Blaming
- Balancing the Scales

Step 3:

Decision Phase

- A change of heart, conversion, new insights that old resolution strategies are not working
- Willingness the consider forgiveness as an option
- Commitment to forgive the offender

Choosing to Forgive (Flanigan, 1992)

- Choosing to expect that no debt be repaid

Step 4:

Working Phase

- Reframing, through role taking, who the wrongdoer is by reviewing him/her in context
- Empathy toward the offender
- Awareness of compassion
- Acceptance

Choosing to Forgive (Flanigan, 1992)

- Setting the injurer free

- Looking ahead

Step 5:

Outcome Phase

- Finding meaning for self and others in the suffering, and in the forgiveness process
- Realization the self has needed forgiveness from others in the past
- Insight that one is not alone
- Realization that self may have a new purpose in life because of the injury
- Awareness of decreased negative affect and, perhaps, increased positive affect, if this begins to emerge, toward the injurer

Emergence of a New Self (Flanigan, 1992)

Self-Forgiveness

Step 1:

Pre-Uncovering Phase

- Denial
- No exploration of the injury
- No admittance or awareness of change of any sort
- No insights or realizations

Step 2:

Uncovering Phase

- Guilt and remorse, perhaps self-anger
- Shame, pervasive sense that others besides myself condemn me
- Cathexis. Energy consumed as I dwell on 2 & 3
- Cognitive rehearsal
- Comparison of myself and another, my more fortunate state to their less fortunate state
- Realization that the one I hurt (self or other) may be permanently changed
- Sense of who I am is altered, I am not perfect, perhaps self condemnation, generalized self-criticism, possible lowered self-esteem

Confronting Yourself, Holding Yourself Responsible (Flanigan, 1992)

Forgiveness as Issue (Bauer et al., 1992)

Step 3:

Decision Phase

- Change of heart or conversion
- Willingness to consider self-forgiveness as an option
- Commitment to forgive self

Movement Towards Healing (Bauer et al., 1992)

- Movement from darkness to light, from estrangement to feeling at home
- Sense of deep struggle and vacillation between acceptance and harsh judgement
- Experience loving acceptance from others

Step 4:

Work Phase

- Reframing toward the self. Not a shift in blame but seeing the self as imperfect and vulnerable.
- Affective self-awareness. Being more aware of ones own suffering as a result of ones behavior
- Compassion
- Accepting of the pain. Not transferring the pain onto others

Confessing Your Flaws (Flanigan, 1992)

Movement Towards Healing (Bauer et al., 1992)

- Sense of letting go of old identity and expectations
- Honest acknowledgement of one's own responsibility

Step 5:

Outcome Phase

- Finding meaning in the event and the suffering
- Realization that one has forgiven others and received forgiveness in the past; thus one could offer this now to the self
- Realization that one is not alone. There is social support and others have had to forgive themselves.
- A new purpose may emerge
- Release.

Appendix F

Forgiveness Process Literature Review

Introduction

My discovery of the forgiveness literature and the realization of its potential linkage and usefulness to interpersonal conflict processes resulted in the need for a review of the literature. My interest was in the processes involved in other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness. As such, what follows is a review of the pertinent empirical and clinical literature.

Other-Forgiveness

Empirical Literature

Enright and The Human Development Study Group (1996) describe the psychological process of other-forgiveness, in the following way. First off, a distinction is made between forgiveness and reconciliation. In forgiveness, a positive stance is offered toward one who is undeserving because of an offence, but the relationship need not be rekindled if the offender insists on maintaining his or her injurious stance. In reconciliation on the other hand, there is a positive change in the relationship on the part of both parties. As Holmgren (1993) has stated, the wrongdoer can be accepted as a person, while not necessarily as an employee (who steals) or a spouse (who batters). "Reconciliation requires a behavioral change on the part of the offender when his or her behavior is injurious" (Enright et al., 1996, p. 109).

Enright and his colleagues have outlined a forgiveness pathway that is at the moment their best estimate of the process. It includes the following 20 units:

Uncovering Phase

1. Examination of psychological defenses.
2. Confrontation of anger with the focus on releasing, not harboring the anger.
3. Admittance of shame, when this is appropriate.
4. Awareness of cathexis.

5. Awareness of cognitive rehearsal of the offence.
6. Insight that the injured party may be comparing self with the injurer.
7. Realization that oneself may be permanently and adversely changed by the injury.
8. Insight into possibly altered “just world” view.

Decision Phase

9. A change of heart, conversion, new insights that old resolution strategies are not working.
10. Willingness to consider forgiveness as an option.
11. Commitment to forgive the offender.

Work Phase

12. Reframing, through role taking, who the wrongdoer is by viewing him or her in context.
13. Empathy toward the offender.
14. Awareness of compassion, as it emerges, toward the offender.
15. Acceptance, absorption of pain.

Outcome Phase

16. Finding meaning for self and others in the suffering and in the forgiveness process.
17. Realization that self has needed others' forgiveness in the past.
18. Insight that one is not alone.
19. Realization that self may have a new purpose in life because of the injury.
20. Awareness of decreased negative affect and, perhaps, increased positive affect, if this begins to emerge, toward the injurer; awareness of internal emotional release (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1996).

In the uncovering phase (units 1-7), a person becomes aware of the problem and the accompanying emotional pain that results from deep, unjust injury. Unit 1 represents a

preforgiving state where the possibility of one's own denial of the offence is examined. There are many people who are unwilling or unable to even acknowledge that they have been offended. Over time, when these defenses start to crack, the injustice is seen and the characteristic reaction of negative emotions including anger and hatred toward the offender occur. This is unit 2. For Holmgren (1993), a forgiver must accurately identify and acknowledge the injustice as a sign of self-respect. Unit 3 represents those times when public humiliation or shame is experienced by an offended person. This serves to deepen the offended person's emotional pain. In the search for a solution to the pain, the injured person may attach significant levels of emotion to the situation, possibly depleting their energy reserves (Unit 4). This cathexis is often accompanied by cognitive rehearsal (Unit 5) where the injured person ruminates on the offense and the offender. In Unit 6 the victim may compare his or her unfortunate state with the more positive state of the perpetrator, increasing the amount of felt pain. Kiel (cited in Enright et al., 1996) has documented this comparing his own quadriplegic condition with the ambulatory condition of the gunman. Becoming aware of a permanent change and/or possibly a disability may serve to deepen anger or remorse. In turn this may promote an altered worldview wherein the injured person understands the world to be profoundly unfair (Unit 7).

The next phase in the forgiveness process consists of new decision-making strategies and a willingness to try different ways of healing. This seems to be stimulated according to Enright et al. (1996), by the injured party's awareness of the previous seven factors. Units 9 through 11 represent this change, the decision to forgive the injuring party. North (1987) has identified what she calls a change of heart, which to some degree is like an about face from one's original position toward the injurer (Unit 9). An about face like this may according to Enright et al. (1996) facilitate a person's weighing of the merits of forgiving (Unit 10) before actually

committing to forgive them (Unit 11). In the process of committing to forgive, the injured party often gives up the notion of revenge even though the forgiveness process is not yet complete.

The work of forgiveness is represented in units 12 to 15. In reframing (Unit 12), the forgiver begins to see the injurer in different ways, focusing on the past (how the individual was raised for example), the pressures that were facing the offender at the time of the injury, and the offender's underlying humanity that was hidden by the offense. "Reframing is not done to condone, but to better understand. Such understanding may promote empathy (Unit 13), feeling the other's feelings, and compassion (Unit 14), or a willingness to suffer along with the other" (Enright et al., 1996, p. 110). Unit 15, acceptance or absorption of the pain is central to the concept of forgiveness. "The offended person soaks up the pain, as a sponge does water, so that he or she does not transfer the pain back to the offender or others. In essence, this unit signifies the gift-like quality of forgiveness as the forgiver stops a cycle of revenge that otherwise may harm the offender and others" (Enright et al., 1996, p. 111).

The final phase is the outcome phase in which the forgiving party may come to realize gifts that they have received as a result of this process. At times new meaning is a result of the forgiveness process (Unit 16), the self being seen as stronger or more respected for example. The forgiver might also realize that he or she is imperfect as well and in so doing recall some instances in which he or she needed to receive forgiveness from others (Unit 17). The latter may actually deepen the forgiver's conviction to forgive. The realization on the part of the forgiver that they are not alone on this journey may also occur (Unit 18). He or she might find support and may well choose new, helpful directions in life with a newfound purpose or goal (Unit 19). An important outcome is an improvement in psychological health (Unit 20).

When the pain has been absorbed (Unit 15) as a sponge absorbs water, that pain gradually diminishes, as the water imperceptibly evaporates from a sponge. The paradox of forgiving seems to be this: As we abandon a focus on self and give a gift of acceptance to an offending other, we ourselves are often healed from the effects of that offense (Enright et al., 1996, p. 111).

Clinical Literature

Safer (1999) outlines the forgiveness process through examples from her own as well as her clients' experiences. She identifies three key components involved in the forgiving of others. They are re-engaging, recognizing and reinterpreting.

Re-engaging entails choosing to reconnect with the relationship that has been wounded or broken. This does not mean reconnecting with the other person but being willing and open to revisiting different historical aspects of the relationship that brought it to its current state.

Recognizing entails the process of identifying specific thoughts, meanings and behaviors on the part of both parties to the conflict that contributed to the escalation of the conflict.

Reinterpreting includes fleshing out the context within which certain behaviors of the other party took place, leading to a new understanding of that person's behavior and often new personal insights as well. What was at one time seen in only one particular way can now be understood from more than one perspective.

Flanigan (1992) comes at forgiveness from a different perspective with similar results to the research of Enright and his colleagues. She interviewed 70 respondents in regards to their experiences with forgiving intimate betrayals. Analysis of these interviews yielded a six-phase forgiveness process that was similar across all of the interviews. They are: naming the injury,

claiming the injury, blaming the injurer, balancing the scales, choosing to forgive and the emergence of a new self.

Phase I: Naming the injury. The overall objective in this phase of the forgiveness process is to help the injured person interpret and clarify the meaning of the injury and his or her beliefs about it. When the naming phase has been completed the injured person will have come to determine the scope and depth of the injury, from the injurious event to identification of specific damages done to the persons belief system. The naming process aids in isolating that which is to be forgiven. Naming the injury also means having to go beyond the raw emotions that exist in the aftermath period. "As you begin the journey of forgiving, you will need to think about the injury as much as feel it. It will be your analysis of the wound that reveals what you must do to forgive it" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 75).

Flanigan (1992) identifies three tasks that need to be completed in the naming phase. They are admitting the permanency of change, exploring the injury, and talking. Each task aids the injured person in interpreting their injury in the light of different dimensions of meaning such that, even if done alone, beliefs about the injury can be constructed. The central theme in admitting the permanency of change is to acknowledge the duration of the injury. The theme of the exploration task is to acknowledge the consequences stemming from the injury. The theme of the talking task is to help the injured person interpret the many aspects of the injury, including the injured person's feelings about it.

The first task in this phase is admitting the permanency of change. People who are left alone to deal with the fallout after their injuries attempt to restore equilibrium to their lives as best they can. After all, even if one is wounded, there is work to do and life carries on. In the attempt to keep going, the temptation is to bury one's feelings, deny the fact that one is being

changed by the injurious event and now that one must change. "It is important in the naming phase (even if you are not able to reason these changes out with someone else) at least to be able to admit to yourself that your life has changed permanently so that you can also admit that you will have to reconstruct your beliefs about justice, trust, and betrayal" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 85).

Admitting the injury serves to acknowledge that the person has been dealt a damaging, permanent wound. This admission also serves to put an end to some things. Denial is slowly replaced with reality. Myths are shattered. The painful truth about the wound becomes absolutely clear. It is difficult for anyone to admit to themselves or others that part of their being has died as a result of some undesired circumstances that they themselves did not bring about. Everyone wants to control changes of a personal nature. The fact is, according to Flanigan (1992), that an injured person is in the process of changing, whether they want to or not. "When you accept this fact and admit it to yourself, you might be able to let down your guard enough to look at the other meanings that are changing for you" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 86).

The second task in this phase is exploring the injury. Exploration further exposes the amount of damage done to a person's beliefs about vulnerability, control, and justice. Further, exploration also uncovers feelings that have been hurt as the injury has further unfolded. One result of a serious injury is that the injured person's whole world can seemingly start to fall apart around them. What is needed at this point, according to Flanigan (1992) is to attempt to identify the feelings and beliefs that are still intact. One way of accomplishing this is to explore what has not changed as well as what has. A series of questions such as the following can serve as a guide.

1. To what (whom) am I vulnerable? To what (whom) am I not vulnerable?
2. What can I control? What can I not control?

3. What can I prevent? What can I not prevent?
4. What feelings are changed by this injury? What feelings are not changed by it?
5. What still seems just?

Answering these questions serves to outline the depths and limits of the injury. The answers also highlight which feelings and beliefs have not been touched by the injury.

It is imperative during the naming the injury phase that the injured party realizes, in spite of the way things appear, that some aspects of their lives are still controllable. “Even if you have been abandoned, molested by a parent, or battered to the bone, you still can exercise some control” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 88). What is key in this approach is that the sooner the injured person can identify the consequences they are dealing with, the sooner they can begin to set goals for forgiveness.

The third task in the naming the injury phase is talking. Some people believe that talking about something that is bothering you is helpful and some do not. In Flanigan’s view, even if talking does not lead to the person’s feeling better right away it serves a critical function. Talking helps the injured party interpret the injurious events and give them meaning. “When you hear yourself tell your story and watch peoples responses or listen to their reactions, you validate your interpretations and begin to understand what your injury meant” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 89).

Talking to a friend or counselor orders the person’s experience. The individual is able to see when the injury started, how it ended and its lasting effects. Talking also is helpful because it shows the injured party that others care for them. The key aspect of talking though, is that it facilitates the expression of feelings while beliefs about the injury’s cause, duration, consequences and controllability are formulated. Without doing this there is no way of moving forward.

Phase II: Claiming the injury. This second phase of the forgiveness process involves taking ownership. Injurious events often have ripple effects that result in injuries for a number of people. The purpose of this phase is to disentangle these effects, stake out the boundaries of one's own injury and claim it as one's own. As in the other phases, there are tasks that need to be completed. Doing so will result, according to Flanigan, in accomplishing the major goal—to stop fighting and running away from the injury.

When you claim your injury, you stop defending yourself against it. You stop denying that your offender has the capacity to hurt people. You accept the permanent changes that result from the offence. You stop rationalizing the behaviors of the offender or providing justifications for his behavior. You give up trying to pretend that nothing has happened. All of your defenses—denial, rationalization, repression, or projection—begin to give way to an honest confrontation with the fact that you are changing (Flanigan, 1992, p. 93).

What is just as important is that one also stops trying to manage everyone else's injuries. One comes to terms with the fact that the harm to self or others cannot be undone and therefore there is no point in trying.

There are two major tasks involved in phase II. In the first, one must separate one's own injury from those of others. In the second one must accept the injury to be permanent by making it a part of who you are to become in the future. Both can be conducted alone or with the help of professionals or friends. Both require that the injured party engage in dialogue with the injury in an active participatory way. "It is like looking someone in the eye and saying 'I see you, I understand you—and [most importantly] I accept you'" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 93).

The first task then, is separation. While knowing that other people may have been hurt, it is important to realize that one cannot do anything about their condition. One must focus on forgiving one's own injury. The separation process serves to clarify and focus what lies ahead in the forgiveness process. This takes time, attention to the tasks, and relief from resource demands. Flanigan states that this is a necessary step, whether it is accomplished right after the injury or many years later.

The first task in claiming your injury is to think carefully about your own experience and compare it to the experience of others. This serves to sort one's injury into different types, those that are yours to claim, and those that belong to others. This sorting process is rather difficult, particularly if one has experienced more than one element of the injury. For instance, "if you have held a protective role and have had to watch the injury you experience overwhelm others whom you were to protect, then it is doubly hard to separate your injury from the wounds of those you tried to keep from harm's way" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 94). Part of one's own wound in this case would result from unsuccessfully keeping yourself or others who trusted you from being hurt. In this case, when you share someone else's sorrow, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep that person's experience from becoming a barrier to your own forgiveness process.

Both adults and children may subconsciously work against the separation of their own pain experience from that of others due to the fear that others will resent them for doing so. Claiming the injury signals that the injured person believes that his or her wounds are unique and worth working on. Flanigan posits that guilt might pose a barrier for some people at this point as the assertion that any aspect of them is unique, even their pain, results in guilt.

There are other barriers to movement in this phase. First, whether the injury was sustained as a child as opposed to as an adult will likely affect the length of time in the

separation process. If the injury took place during childhood the separation process will take longer. Related to this is the fact that the lengthier the time since the incident the more likely that aspects of the incident will be forgotten from memory. It will take longer to recall details that will facilitate movement.

There are also daily barriers to the separation process. The most common are the demands of personal resources and intertwined self-concepts. When a person is in a state of pain and confusion he or she is drained of the psychological resources needed to continue fighting. When a person such as this also needs to meet the needs of others they are likely to find themselves so exhausted that they have no energy left to begin to separate their injuries from those of others. Freedom and time are needed to do this work. Flanigan provides the experience of one of her interviewees as clarification.

Roseanne was in her early thirties when her husband was arrested one evening at the couple's home. It seems that for a long time he had been writing fraudulent checks at his business. Suddenly, this rather inexperienced homemaker was fending off bill collectors, making business decisions, raising her children alone, and attempting to maintain her family's dignity in the community. She was not only shocked by her husband's character flaws but also overwhelmed with demands of her time and psychological resources It took Roseanne time to decide what her husband had actually done to her that she had to forgive and to separate it out from what had happened to her parents and children after the same event Separation of the injury took a long time because Roseanne's resources were stretched to the limit. She had to take care of the crises first before she could stop to take in the changes in herself (Flanigan, 1992, p. 97).

An additional barrier to separating out the different aspects of an injury is the blurring of boundaries that takes place between people who know each other intimately. A mother or father, for example, by definition have the label specifically because they have children. That part of the parent's self-concept would not develop without the existence of children. This holds for all reciprocal relationships such as husbands and wives, grandparents and grandchildren. When a part of a person exists solely because of the existence of another individual, it is not difficult to see that self-concepts become at least partially defined by other people.

Given this situation, it is easy for a person to experience the pain of another who partially defines them. To claim an injury one must work to refrain from doing this. Any person whose identity is interwoven with that of another needs to untangle this portion of his or her identity before the separation of injury can take place. Flanigan states that this does not mean to say that acknowledging the pain of another because of the actions of a third party is bad or wrong. The problem arises when in acknowledging another's pain one fails to recognize one's own pain as distinct from others pain. "A child experiencing a tornado may ache for months because his favorite toy was destroyed. His father may worry silently because he fears for the family's financial future. Both may speak of 'the tornado,' but each has to claim what was special to him. Only then can the actual loss be grieved" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 98).

People may use this failure to separate injuries as an unintentional mechanism to control the pain. If one focuses on someone else's pain there is less requirement that one focus on one's own. Doing this may work to some degree in delaying the pain, but it also delays the forgiveness process.

The second task in claiming the injury is incorporation. All people are to some extent, comprised of their accomplishments, training, rewards they have received, the love, hate,

encouragement and misfortune they have encountered. It is a relatively easy task for people to willfully incorporate the good experiences they have had into the working parts of their daily selves. Incorporating the damage one experiences is another story altogether. “Much of the damage people experience is, instead, taken in unconsciously and turned inward into depression and illness, or it may be turned onto others in the form of aggression. No matter which it is, our good fortune or our injuries, we are a composite of all our experiences—not just the good ones” (Flanigan. 1992, p. 100).

To incorporate means to unite or blend indistinguishably into something that already exists. Unconscious incorporation of injurious experiences is natural. It is one of the human species’ survival and defense mechanisms. According to Flanigan though, the incorporation of major injuries should be accomplished consciously, as soon after the injury as possible, such that the damage does not get internalized unconsciously.

This unconscious absorption of a negative experience into the human psyche may act like a slow poison and in the end become psychologically toxic. “Numerous people I talked to reported that they thought they would literally die if they did not forgive their injurer. They had become ‘poisoned’ by their own hatred and grief” (Flanigan. 1992, p. 100). Subconscious incorporation can cause a terrible sense of malaise, grief and hatred. It can also cause shame when there should be none, shame being a sense of failure at the core of one’s being. Shame arises from a sense of falling short as a person. Wounded people who internalize unconsciously can end up feeling as if they were injured because they exist, not for any specific thing they did or did not do. What is important then, is to incorporate the experience in a positive way. To do so says Flanigan, one must have named the injury and then have separated it from everyone else’s.

Based on her interviews, Flanigan states that people who forgive have two things in common. The first is that they start to make their pain work for them. The second is that they change from looking at the past to looking to the future. The process of making pain work is an intentional one in which the management of damage is kept at a conscious level rather than leaving it for the unconscious to deal with, with the concomitant toll on health and mental health. Fundamentally, putting pain to work means finding something—anything—positive about it. This is not an easy task. Particularly when one is experiencing agony. At the same time, it is not impossible.

Flanigan's interviewees cited a number of positive side effects of pain. The first one is the kindness of people. People one might not expect to, come out of the woodwork to lend support following the injury. Friends, neighbors, family members, and even strangers show caring and offer support. A great deal of love can surface when people are suffering. What is important according to Flanigan is that the injury person needs to notice it—and treasure it. "Loving supporters, even those gained from misfortune, are gifts. Many interviewees were stunned by the love they unexpectedly received from other people when they were in a most vulnerable state' (Flanigan, 1992, p. 102).

A second positive aspect of pain identified in the interviews was that it frequently gave rise to an unparalleled sense of resolve. Many of the wounded people reported that they summoned the resolve to stop the pain from overwhelming other unsuspecting victims. Unconsciously internalized injuries are capable of doing more harm than the original injury. As such it is important that damage control play an active and conscious part of incorporating the injury.

A further positive outcome of pain is that it may provide the freedom to try new experiences, those that one would not likely have tried before the injury. Early on the injured might make changes that seem reactionary and extreme. They are not likely to continue in these new lifestyles (Flanigan, 1992) but it serves to show them that they can make changes to different lifestyles at a later point if they so choose. Further on in the forgiving process the injured may choose to try out new beliefs and experiences in a more purposive way, making these decisions based on their own choices rather than chance.

It seems that this psychological pain can have positive points even fairly soon after the injury. Flanigan (1992) likens it to a bitter pill whose contents ultimately help the injured person regain their health. It must be swallowed every day, the bitterness tasted, followed by the remembrance that because of this pill one has found new friends, rediscovered cherished values, had new experiences, and developed new skills.

Separating and incorporating are the two key components in claiming and injury. "It is essential to the claiming phase for the wounded to give up the struggle to fight off the changes that will result from the unforgivable injury. Ultimately, a person who succeeds in forgiving must do so from a position of strength. This means that the sooner you can find empowerment from the bad experiences you have endured, the sooner you gain strength over it" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 104).

Phase III: Blaming the injurer. The third phase of forgiving is blaming the injurer. Blaming is defined here as concluding that someone is responsible for causing something to happen, and that what happened is wrong (Flanigan, 1992). If the blaming process is not undertaken it is likely that the injured person will continue to ruminate over the injury, finally sinking in a combination of self-blame, confusion, and rage.

Whereas the first two stages answer the questions what has happened and what has been harmed, this stage answers the questions who hurt me and why did they do it. “Without an answer to these questions, you can be psychologically paralyzed, unable to move forward in life and certainly unable to forgive anyone” (Flanigan, 1992, p.106).

Blame has negative connotations for many people. This is in no way surprising given the way it is used in our society to shift the focus of negative attention from oneself onto some other person or group. All one really needs to do is read a daily paper to see it in action. In the present approach blame takes on a different role. According to Flanigan (1996), anger that results from an injury is not anger without cause. If an injured person does not identify the person who is accountable, the person to blame, then he or she will continue to focus on his or her own feelings rather than focusing on the logic of the injury. “Someone can be held accountable for an injury. Someone is wrong. Someone should be identified. Then someone can be forgiven” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 107).

To blame someone is first to hold them accountable for causing something to happen (Shaver, 1985), and second to assert that the responsible person did something wrong (Morris, 1976). Blaming serves two purposes: first it distinguishes one from the injurer, clarifying those roles; and second it clarifies one’s intentions and those of the injurer in regards to the injury. This process aids in seeing the roles that each party played in the injury. At the same time, while each party is seen to have contributed, the one or ones that should be accountable are also identified. Blaming serves to shift one’s focus outward towards solutions to the injury.

Blaming, says Flanigan, is not necessarily easy to do. Seeking answers to the questions who and why is difficult to do. Establishing responsibility and getting to the point of blaming someone represent the point in the forgiveness process at which the injured begin to regain

power. Blaming then, requires that the injured person become involved in his or her own process of healing. Whereas the naming and claiming phases are more reflective and internal processes, blaming needs action. Taking action provides people with some level of control over events in their lives.

The first action involved in blaming, as Flanigan sees it, is identifying whom it is that can be blamed for the victims' injury. Flanigan outlines the internal self-talk that takes place during the aftermath, naming, claiming and blaming phases. She states that self-blame is the main theme during the aftermath phase, identifying exactly what happened is the theme during the naming and claiming phases and identifying one of three targets to be held to blame is the theme during the blaming phase. In the first transformation, the injurer is seen as solely to blame. He or she was responsible and wrong. In the second transformation, both the injured and the injurer were seen to be responsible, but the injurer broke a moral contract and was alone to blame. In the third conclusion the result is that both parties are responsible, wrong, to blame and in need of forgiveness.

The transformation process is not necessarily straightforward. When the perpetrator has committed sexual assault, or is a thief, or a self-serving, bold-faced liar it is easier to identify whom to blame. Alternatively, when people are believed to contribute on an equal basis to the situation that results in injury, it may take a much longer time to figure out which person did something wrong. It is this identification though, that is the end product of the blaming phase.

There are three tasks involved in the blaming phase. They are filtering, weighing and fact-finding. The filtering task requires that the injured person identify all the people who could conceivably be blamed for the injury and submit them to a "filter" of logic. Flanigan likens this process to the task handed to a jury following closing arguments of the prosecuting and defense

attorneys. The jury's task is to sift through the presented evidence and decide who could be guilty and then who is guilty. The one difference here is that the jury has to stick to the evidence presented whereas the injured party tends to examine his or her entire life experience and the entire life experience of the injuring party, if that is possible. It is here that the concepts of recent and distant causes come into play.

Each event has distant and recent causes. If one is sitting in a favorite chair and reading for example, distant causes would include that the manufacturer made the chair, overtime hours were worked to afford the chair, the chair it was purchased 15 years ago and so on. A more recent cause would be that a difficult day at work had been completed and the chair was chosen as a resting-place because it was a favorite and very comfortable. The idea here is that there are recent and distant causes that form a chain of events that lead up to any point in time.

An injury is no different, people can remember distant experiences that may have contributed to an injury as well as more recent ones. The filtering task demands that one sift and filter through both the distant and recent events associated with an injury and determine who might still be logically held responsible. Filtering, according to Flanigan, is the beginning task in the process of blaming. In and of itself it does not identify whom to blame. It facilitates the generation of a list of people associated with an injury such that one can begin to think logically about who might be blamed. "Filtering results in a sort of snapshot of the players in an unforgivable injury. Once the players are identified, the part each played in the injury can be explored. Some can be cut from the snapshot, some can remain there, and some can finally be held responsible" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 113).

The weighing task, task two, reveals who is responsible and who is not. Responsibility is typically assigned on a scale from minimally responsible to mostly responsible. At the lower end

is where one places individuals who were associated in any way with the event. Further along the scale is what Flanigan calls the “foreseeability mark”. To foresee means to anticipate beforehand the possible events that might occur. For example, if you know you have a low tolerance for alcohol and get drunk easily, but go to a party and have ten drinks, you could have anticipated that you might get drunk. You hold yourself responsible because you could have foreseen getting drunk. Injured individuals can hold their perpetrators accountable when the conclusion is made that the injurers could have seen beforehand that their actions might possibly have led to the injury. “If one party in a moral relationship knows that her action might breach the relationship, she can be held accountable for the breach at the level of foreseeability” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 115).

The highest level on the responsibility scale is intentionality. Here a person knows that if a certain action is taken that a given result will occur. Intentionality goes further than foreseeability. A person whose car runs out of gas on a sweltering hot day could have foreseen that he or she would get a sunburn from the long walk for gas. The sunburn was not intended. A person who intends to cause an event and then goes through with it is more responsible than anyone else on the responsibility scale is. Ultimately the pain cause by the different parties at different places on the responsibility scale may be the same, but the person who intended the injury is the most responsible (Flanigan, 1992).

Intentionality in regards to injury applies to the breach of trust and a contract. Even if one can foresee that a specific behavior will likely provoke a particular response what is key is that the reaction should not be one that violates trust or a moral agreement.

If, for instance, a husband diapers the baby sloppily, he might anticipate a complaint.

Complaints do not violate rules of most marriages. On the other hand, if his wife were to

respond by stabbing him with a steak knife or unleashing a vitriolic verbal assault that goes on for hours, in all likelihood it would break some moral rules between them. The wife is to blame, even though the husband might have foreseen that his sloppy diapering would provoke a negative reaction (Flanigan, 1992, p.118).

Flanigan identifies two general rules for fixing responsibility and they are:

1. If the injurer is seen to intentionally have broken a vow or promise, or violated a moral rule, the injurer is to blame. This holds even if the injured party might have predicted some of the consequences.
2. If both parties could have predicted that the outcomes of their actions would put a strain on the relationship but only one is seen to have done something wrong, then the individual who behaved wrongly is more to blame.

The third task in the blaming the injurer phase is fact-finding. Here the injured typically seek one answer: Has the perpetrator ever exhibited this kind of behavior before? That is, is there a pattern of behavior here, or consistency over time, because where there is a pattern of such behavior there is often intentionality (Flanigan, 1992). People continue to blame themselves for what has happened, even after the shock has had a chance to dissipate. They do this, says Flanigan (1992) because they understand their own patterns of behavior to a greater extent than the injurer's. Fact-finding can provide the revelation that the injurer's behavior was consistent with that which he or she had exhibited in the past, only those behaviors had been previously concealed.

Blaming as a part of the forgiveness process, results from the completion of three tasks: filtering, weighing, and fact-finding. When these are accomplished the injured party has finished the transformation from self-blamer to other-blamer and then can continue on in the forgiveness

process. "Once you can blame, you know whom you must forgive. When you resolve the identity of the person to forgive, you are closer to accomplishing that goal" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 123).

Phase IV: Balancing the scales. The fourth phase in Flanigan's forgiveness process is balancing the scales. The purpose of the work in this phase is to restore to the injured, to some degree at least, the power or resources that were lost due to the injury. Forgiving takes place from a position of strength, not from weakness. As such, the forgiver must believe that he or she has the same strength, or as many assets as the injurer in order to forgive the injurer. This phase serves to restore the balance of resources in a relationship to the extent that they can be restored.

Relationships between friends and family members are constructed from trust, love, habits, sharing of information, and resource management and change, among other things. Occasionally one party will contribute more or less to a relationship than others will. Taking this into account, each relationship will find its own balance such that it can continue to function.

Given this state of events, balance implies a level of relational dependence within any intimate group of people (Chubb, 1990; Minuchin, 1974). When one person makes a change all other members must make minor adjustments to keep the relationship intact (Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch, 1974). In the case of injury, this balance is usually crushed when one party increases his or her own choice at the expense of the other party.

Flanigan posits that choice can be taken from people in three ways. They can be deprived of physical freedom, pertinent information can be withheld, or lies can be told. Further, she states that any of these methods of choice deprivation can serve as the event that prompts a relational injury (1992). Sexual assaults, battering, and physical and psychological threats are

examples of one person denying the physical freedom of another. Withholding information and telling lies are related in that both result in one attempting to make a reasoned choice while one's options have been obscured.

Most people remain in relationships as long as they believe they can make as many option choices as the constraints of the relationship will allow. Losing choice forces the relationship into imbalance. The process of balancing the scales returns power and or resources and serves to restore the wounded person's options. In this way the injured can come to see that his or her life is once again fair.

There are four tasks involved in balancing the scales. Once again these tasks require more activity than the tasks in the previous phases as they are intentionally directed at empowerment rather than greater understanding. The tasks serve as a menu from which to choose, based on who you decided is to blame and whether the injurer is available or not. The four tasks are:

1. To consider the injury over and done with and move on to the next phase.
2. To punish the injurer.
3. To load resources to your depleted reserves.
4. To mock-punish the injurer.

Any number of tasks may be chosen. Each is purported to empower the wounded and put him or her in a position of strength.

The first task option is to consider the injury over and done with and move on to the next phase. This task is for those who concluded in the blaming phase that they and the injurer both were responsible for the chain of events that resulted in the damaged relationship. Accepting one's own wrongdoing or frailties can be a very painful and humbling experience. It takes a

significant amount of fortitude to engage in the kind of self-analysis necessary to reach the conclusion that one was fifty percent responsible for the injury. Flanigan suggests that a first step might be the acceptance of self as one that is capable of harming others. A second step might be that one could have predicted that one's behavior would result in the painful situation that occurred. "This self-searching for equal blame is one task on the menu for balancing the scales. It does not mean that you accept more blame than the injurer but, rather, equal blame. Once you arrive at this conclusion, the choice to forgive is available" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 131)

The second task option is to punish the injurer. Flanigan found within her sample that it was frequently the case that the injurer was assessed the blame for the injury. Further, she found that a common method used to balance the scales was to punish the injurer. Flanigan makes a distinction between punishment and revenge, although one that is not entirely clear. She states that there is a fine line between the two and the differences lies in that revenge arises from deep rage released through taking punitive action whereas the goal of punishment is to teach a lesson. "Punishment lets a person know what he did wrong. Revenge does not. Punishment is fair and constructive. Revenge is not" (Flanigan, 1992, p.132).

So what is punishment meant to accomplish? Punishment is one method of reducing the number of choices a person can make (von Hirsch, 1976; Schwartz, 1978). This forced reduction in choices is supposed to be enough, in and of itself, to cause the individual to think twice prior to repeating the offences (von Hirsch, 1976). Choice is an awful thing to have taken away. Once an individual has experienced the loss of choice, so the theory goes, he or she can have a great deal of empathy for others who have also been deprived.

Punishment can be meted out in numerous ways but the most common among Flanigan's interviewees was the withholding of resources such as money, sex, visitation rights, or

communication. What was key to the success of the punishment though, was for the offender to be told why he or she was being punished, while being punished. "If reasons are not understood, punishment is more like revenge, and the punished person is not sure what he must do to make things right" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 134).

In order to put punishment to use one must have some resource to withhold or strength that can be exacted. For example, children are easy to punish as parents have greater strength and hold most if not all of the family's resources. At the same time it is difficult if not impossible for children to punish parents.

One difficulty with this logic is that who is to say what is punishment and what is revenge. One person's punishment could very well be another's revenge, given the fine line between them. It also raises a concern given the research findings in the aggression literature. In this literature punishment is seen to have a positive effect only in cases where it is prompt, certain, strong, and justified (Baron & Byrne, 1997). Whether all of these are in play when one is attempting to balance the scales is a question that remains to be answered.

Finally, punishment cannot be utilized to balance the scales if the offender is no longer around. This is a common occurrence and results in the need for another alternative. The next methods offer some alternatives.

The third possibility is loading the scales. The thinking here is that one one's resources are taken one must purposively replace them with alternative resources. This is accomplished by taking action to regain advantage. An important issue here is that the resources be gained through the action of the wounded individual, not through the work of someone else. In the former case the action serves to increase the self-esteem of the individual and facilitates moving the process along more quickly. This is not so in the latter case.

Forgivers I interviewed variously joined groups, started new relationships, took classes, found work, took on responsibilities, worked on political campaigns, and launched into numerous other activities. Each method dramatically increased the choices available to the wounded person. Through their activities, people made new friends, gained access to financial resources, and reacquainted themselves with their own strengths (Flanigan, 1992, p. 136).

The forth-possible approach is to mirror the injury. This method is primarily used by those who are powerless or too young to punish their offenders, and tends to be self-destructive. Mirroring is a phenomenon common to people who were injured as children, such as the case where a person abused as a child repeats this cycle with his or her own children. It is usually an unconscious process wherein the wounded person changes roles and repeats his or her injury but this time in the role of the person inflicting the harm. In this seemingly illogical way the wounded person becomes as “bad” as the offender, and the “badness” scale is balanced. In this process there is no increase in choices for the wounded person nor is there an imposition of the wounded person’s will onto the injurer as is the case in loading and punishing.

Given that mirroring is an unconscious process, that the mirroring person does not understand his or her own behavior, it is a much less effective method of balancing the scales. Balancing is meant to be active and has a purpose, whereas mirroring does not. Flanigan states that even if forgiveness results from knowing oneself as an individual with the capacity to hurt others, forgiveness has been achieved at a very high price.

The final method Flanigan offers for balancing the scales is useful when no other way is available. It is called mock punishment. The difference between punishment and mock punishment is that the latter is an action taken against the offender in absentia. Such approaches

include writing a condemnation letter, telling a friend or therapist what one might like to say in person to the offender or acting out an exchange using one's imagination for example. Mock punishment may seem at times to be rather aggressive, yet it may be significantly healthier than continually repeating the injury with other innocent people. "Punishment is not wrong.

Violence is. Punishment is a person's and a society's way to restore balance and to prepare people for reacceptance. Society's reacceptance is restored privileges and a clean slate for the criminal. A person's reacceptance is forgiveness and a powerful heart" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 141).

Phase V: Choosing to forgive. When all the previous tasks have been completed the only one remaining is choosing to forgive. Unlike previous tasks, this one is purely rational in nature. Choosing to forgive arises from and is guided by clear-headed thinking. Why does one choose to forgive? People do so for the sake of their own well being, not for the well being of the person who injured them. Flanigan (1992) says that one does so because of the instinct of self-preservation. When thinking clearly and rationally, it is only wise to choose a course of action that preserves one's being.

An unforgivable injury that has festered and grown is like a worm crawling into an apple. It can take hold of your core and damage the heart permanently. Unforgivable injuries break dreams and assault beliefs; but if they are allowed to damage your core, you have let someone else not only destroy your dreams but destroy you . . . It is one thing to have your heart broken; it is quite another to have it poisoned. Broken hearts repair. Poisoned hearts shrivel and die (Flanigan, 1992, p. 144).

Choosing to forgive is a life changing decision point. Making the decision results in a distinctly different life. This change is what makes choosing to forgive a scary process (Flanigan, 1992). Everything is different, particularly where the injurer is concerned, once the

choice is made. As in the other phases there are tasks to be completed and barriers to be overcome. The three tasks to be accomplished are as follows:

1. Making the choice to release the injurer from debt
2. Making the choice to cut the bonds that still hold you to the injurer
3. Making the choice to look ahead, not back

As in many of the tasks, choosing to forgive is accompanied by a number of personal changes.

First, in choosing to release the injurer from debt there are not only gains to be had but losses to be dealt with as well. According to Flanigan (1992), the biggest loss when releasing the injurer from debt will likely be the loss of the sense of self-righteousness that arises from the injury.

This self-righteousness is different from arrogance in that it is about the injured person gaining strength through deciding that someone else wronged him or her. It may seem on the surface that in choosing to forgive one is giving up this newfound strength, and that in doing so the injurer wins. Actually, releasing someone from debt in the choosing phase has nothing to do with weakness. The meaning attached to it is this; the injured party was right, the perpetrator was wrong *and* the injured party no longer wants the perpetrator to repay his or her debt. In Flanigan's (1992) perspective, the other phases of forgiving will have provided the injured with strength such that over time nothing is needed from the injurer. This does not mean blame is being put aside, but rather that no further exchanges between injured and injurer are necessary, as they owe each other nothing.

A second change that choosing to forgive brings is an increase in personal responsibility. In truth, many would prefer to have someone around to blame for his or her mistakes and misfortunes. In choosing to want nothing from the injurer one lets go of the notion of making

that individual responsible for anything in one's future. In choosing to forgive, one becomes reliant on one's self for future happiness.

One's responsibility to others is also changes when one chooses to cancel a debt. These responsibilities were some of the final changes that one of Flanigan's interviewee's made. In here words:

To harbor anger, you lose a lot of responsibility. Anger is a great excuse not to visit a forgetful old person or drive across town to do a favor. If you forgive, you're right back in the human race as a responsible person. Forgiving has nothing to do with trust. It means you have to take risks again. You are vulnerable again . . . Anger allows you not to have to meet obligations—buying gifts, doing favors. That's why forgiving is so hard. You have to get back in it again (Flanigan, 1992, p.147).

When one truly chooses to forgive, one is making the decision that nothing is wanted or needed from the perpetrator—no apology, promise, or restitution of any kind. This is a freely made choice. It does not just happen on its own.

The second task in the fifth phase is setting the injurer free. According to Flanigan (1992) there is a bond between the perpetrator and the injured party. This bond, which was originally love, as Flanigan sees unforgivable wounds as happening between people in close relationships, turns to hate after having passed through a period of grief and loss. The bond's final form is the thread of hope that one day the relationship can be restored to what it once was. It may be that one hopes in vain that an abusive parent will eventually provide the unconditional love that was withheld in the past. Or it may be that one secretly hopes or believes that an old lover will eventually return after leaving his or her current love interest. Forgiveness breaks this bond, closing the door leaving one to begin anew.

Flanigan (1992) describes the two parties of an intimate injury as defining each other. Without a victim there cannot be a perpetrator. There cannot be a wounded individual without an injurer. "So, to set the injurer free is to set the injured free. If one is no longer an injurer, the other can no longer think of herself as 'injured'" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 148). In so doing the relationship between the injurer and the injured has changed.

Even in cases where the two parties choose to continue their relationship, the relationship is permanently changed. The context has changed. Relationships are reaffirmed but not restored. Much like releasing a balloon and watching it drift up to into the clouds, once forgiven the injurer is no longer held in check. There will continue to be pictures and memories of the past, a history that is valid. Forgiveness does not erase this validity. Letting someone go through forgiveness does not mean that one is negating the whole past relationship that was shared. There still remains a portion that has meaning. "Forgiveness validates the memory of the relationship because it acknowledges that there was caring, then pain, then freeing the self to go on with what remains of life ahead" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 150).

Generally, people dislike severing bonds. Part of the reason is likely that we do not do it well. For example, In a study of how children initiate and terminate friendships, Bell and Haddas (cited in Hocker & Wilmott, 1991) found that children had twice as many ideas of how to get other children to be friends then they did about how to end a friendship. If people do not learn the appropriate way to end relationships as children, it is not surprising that they have trouble as adults. According to Flanigan (1992), the only approach open to the victim once the injurer has severed a relationship, is to forgive. Here the victim saying "I forgive you" is seen as being similar to the original offence. Its goal is to benefit the victim, it severs a relationship that was once moral, and it is the mark of a new beginning for the victim. It is dislike the original

offence in that it is not vicious, it does not violate a moral contract, one person's position is not enhanced at the cost of another's, and it is a gift of freedom given to the self and the injurer. All debts are paid and both are free.

Flanigan (1992) identifies one final barrier to choosing to forgive, one that she sees as central to why many people are unable to forgive. Her line of reasoning goes this way. No matter how terrible an injury might be, it serves to generate some positive side effects. For example, early on, people may find out new things about themselves as they survive day to day. New friends may be made, support from family offered and new internal values identified. Later, in the midst of the forgiveness process, the injured may find strength in helping others similarly afflicted. Further, the personal changes that result from the wound may be a person's first experience of feeling special, of thinking about themselves in a unique way.

The new self that emerges in the forgiveness process may either continue to build a person's strength as the wounds heal or keep the person from moving on. There is the possibility that the aforementioned activities become central to the individual's new identity. If the new identity is tied too closely to the injury, choosing to forgive may very well become too difficult to accomplish. Doing so would mean dealing with losing what has been gained.

When someone chooses to set his or her perpetrator free they no longer define anything about themselves in reference to their injurer. They move towards self-definition, without any reference to the injurer or injury. A person who has successfully forgiven a perpetrator no longer wants or needs anything from him or her.

A process of mourning accompanies any severing of relationship ties. When people set others free their roles change. This change means that the future will unfold, but different from one's past expectations. It is not uncommon that people feel apprehensive about changes that

have been thrust upon them. To forgive is to let go of past dreams and things that “could have been.” Mourning the passing of a dream is a positive process, but not forgiving for fear of mourning may paralyze or poison (Flanigan, 1992).

“Fear of loss of the validity of one’s past, fear of new responsibilities, fear of having no special identity, and fear of morning can each stand in the way of saying ‘I forgive you’” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 152). Recognizing the fears that are holding up the forgiveness process can serve to clarify the tasks of choosing to forgive. It is often fear that keeps people stuck in their current place. In the recognition of this, people can choose to do something about their fears. “To come so far in the process and not complete it can paralyze you psychologically for many years—or forever” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 152).

The third and final task that Flanigan (1992) outlines in this phase is looking ahead, not back. Engaging in this task does not mean that one would never look back or that the past is forgotten, but rather that one does not dwell there. People who forgive need to be cognizant of where they have been and the path that brought them to their current position. Not doing so would just set them up to repeat their past mistakes. “Letting go may bring a fleeting sorrow, but it is soon over. Anticipation and a newly felt freedom replace any lingering sorrow” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 153).

Phase VI: The Emergence of a New Self. People who succeed in forgiving someone will have successfully worked through a series of conversions according to Flanigan (1992). These people will have been forced to accept that their central beliefs have fallen short and that new beliefs will likely come to take their place. The process of successfully working through these conversions culminates in the forging of a new person, one who has a transformed outlook on the world. Paradoxically, wounds of this sort offer people the rare opportunity to make fundamental

changes. “The experience of being wounded may force you against your will to alter your dreams, myths, and expectations of life; but where else can you experience a confrontation so rare? To really be able to transform one’s essential beliefs is a chance of a lifetime. To do it well is an art” (Flanigan, 1992, p. 161).

The series of conversions outlined by Flanigan (1992) are as follows:

1. From a person who does not understand the harm done to him to someone who incorporates his injury to one who no longer considers himself to be injured.
2. From a person who blames himself to someone who blames another to one who blames no one.
3. From a person who does not want to change to someone who accepts that he must change to one who directs the course of his change.
4. From a person who wants the present to return to the past to someone who hangs on to the present to one who only looks to the future.
5. From a person who is acted upon to someone who cannot act to one who acts on the things he knows he can act on.
6. From a person who trusts to someone who does not trust to one who may choose to trust if he wants.
7. From a person who loves to someone who hates to someone who either loves in a different way or is indifferent to the injurer.
8. From a person who feels equal in power or resources to someone who feels depleted of resources to one who feels equal again (Flanigan, 1992, p. 163).

These conversions are understood to take place little by little as people work through the first five phases of forgiving. The major transformation happens at the end of the forgiving process.

Here the many smaller changes converge, transforming the person's core beliefs about the principles of life. What is key is that forgiveness is not complete for people until all the independent beliefs that have changed fit harmoniously together again. According to Flanigan (1992), distress is felt until this occurs.

This leads Flanigan (1992) to what she calls the Forgiveness Principle. This principle is the conclusion people who have completed the forgiveness process arrive at. It is that harm is an ever-present potential. Much like fun, love, or death, harm is a part of life. "Any harm can be interpreted to make sense, because there is a reason for it and something that controls it. Some harm you can control; some you cannot. Once a person accepts that harm happens and in many respects cannot be controlled, almost nothing can be unforgivable again" (Flanigan, 1992, p. 165). I would emphasize the almost in the last sentence. Situations can be thought of in which harm was severe enough that forgiveness would be near impossible to contemplate.

In this approach to forgiveness control over life's events becomes a matter of accepting that some things in life are controllable and others are not. Justice comes to mean that harm happens and that no one is immune to it. It is not to be understood that those who forgive are masochists ready to submit to pain at any time. Rather that once one has come to believe that injury is a part of life that one will avoid it when possible and to withdraw from it if it is unfair or extreme.

The Self-Forgiveness Process

Empirical Literature

For Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996) the self-forgiveness process is outlined as follows:

Uncovering Phase

1. Denial. What I did to other or self is not so bad; I am not particularly hurt.

2. Guilt (one's own sense of justice was violated in what one did) and remorse (sadness).
Perhaps self anger is involved as one acknowledges wrong against self or other(s).
3. Shame. A pervasive sense that others besides myself condemn me.
4. Cathexis. Energy is consumed as I dwell on guilt, remorse, and shame (Units 2 and 3).
5. Cognitive rehearsal. Replaying the event over and over in my mind.
6. Comparison of myself and other. If I hurt another person, I compare my more fortunate state with their less fortunate state. If I hurt myself, I compare myself before and after the hurtful event(s).
7. Realization that the one I hurt (which could be another person or myself) may be permanently and adversely changed, and in severe cases permanently, by my actions.
8. The sense of "who I am" may be altered. Realization that I am imperfect; generalized self-criticism; perhaps self-condemnation and possibly lower self-esteem.

Decision Phase

9. Change of heart or conversion. Realization that one must change course.
10. Willingness to consider self-forgiveness as an option. What is self-forgiveness? Is it a worthwhile endeavor?
11. Commitment to forgive self. The person makes a commitment to avoid self-condemnation or even subtle self-revenge and self-abuse.

Work Phase

12. Reframing toward the self. One puts oneself in context, seeing the pressures one was under, past habits, or past responses. This is not done to shift the blame to others or to the environment, but to see the self as vulnerable, imperfect.

13. Affective self-awareness. Being more aware of one's own suffering as a result of what one had done.
 14. Compassion. Being willing to love oneself in spite of one's actions and subsequent suffering.
 15. Accepting the pain. Being willing to accept both the pain of one's own actions and the subsequent suffering. By accepting the pain one does not then transfer the pain to others.
- Outcome Phase
16. Finding meaning in the event of offense and subsequent suffering.
 17. Realization that self has forgiven others and received forgiveness from others in the past; thus, one could offer this now to the self.
 18. Realization that one is not alone. There is social support and others have had to forgive themselves.
 19. A new purpose may emerge. How one will live from this point may be different, given the difficulties.
 20. Release. Outcome of relief from excessive guilt and remorse.

The uncovering phase (Units 1 to 8) is similar to the uncovering phase in other-forgiveness in regards to awareness of the pains experienced, although there are implications for helping professionals. Firstly, according to Enright et al. (1996), there is a need to distinguish whether the original offence was directed at self or other. If the offense was directed at another person there may be a need for receiving forgiveness as well as self-forgiveness. Further, the helping professional would need to identify which affective responses were operating at the level of Unit 2. Guilt and self-anger can have very different dynamics, and one or both may be at play here.

Moving on to the next phase (Units 9 to 11) one needs to be cognizant here as in other types of forgiveness, that good intentions to change do not necessarily mean that the person will follow through (Unit 9). In comparison, there seems to be a good deal of similarity between what Enright and his colleagues outline here and in the same phase in other-forgiveness. At the same time, the decision phase in self-forgiveness differs from its counterpart in other-forgiveness in one distinct way. This has to do with reconciliation. Self-forgiveness and reconciliation with self are highly related processes, whereas other-forgiveness and reconciliation are distinct processes, as has been discussed earlier.

The work of self-forgiveness (Units 12 to 15) corresponds with the work of other-forgiveness. "At that point, the person puts him- or herself in context, viewing one's past, the pressures on oneself at the time of the offense, and considers whether he or she should welcome him- or herself back into the human community [Unit 12] (Enright et al., 1996, p.118). Rather than describing Unit 13 as empathy, given the question as to whether we actually can empathize with self, Enright and his colleagues refer to it as becoming more aware of our suffering. As this awareness deepens, the individual is more likely to be able to extend loving compassion towards him- or herself (Unit 14). One very important aspect is Unit 15, in which there is acceptance of the pain caused by the actual offence, and the suffering that has emerged over time as a result of the original offense. "As in the other forgiveness paths, this acceptance is a crux of forgiveness and perhaps healing" (Enright et al., 1996, p. 118).

The last five Units, the outcome phase, correspond with the same phase in other-forgiveness. Bauer, L., Duffy, J., Fountain, E., Halling, S., Holzer, M., Jones, E., Leifer, M., and Rowe, J. O. (1992) perceive social support (Unit 18) to play a central role in accepting oneself. Enright et al. (1996) posit that this may be indicative that social support comes earlier in the

process, in the decision phase. It is expected that individuals completing the process would experience similar outcomes to those focused on other-forgiveness (Enright et al., 1996).

Bauer et al. (1992) undertook a phenomenological study of self-forgiveness using in-depth interviews with seven participants. The authors describe the process of self-forgiveness, what they call “experiencing forgiveness”, as a movement away from fundamental estrangement to being at home with one’s self in the world. This feeling of being at home involves a shift in one’s identity, which feels foreign and familiar simultaneously. “As if recognizing for the first time someone who has always been there: that which one has avoided accepting fully about oneself, the capacity to be enraged or hurtful, for example, is acknowledged as part of who one is” (Bauer et al., 1992, p.153). It is a movement away from an attitude of judgement to embracing and accepting who one is. This shift comes out of the larger meaning the specific offense has for one’s life. The initial offence tends to be experienced within the context of a specific occasion, but with time, the awareness grows that by merely being human one is in need of forgiveness. A level of clarity appears about one’s self and one’s place in the world, a broader perspective with a feeling of connectedness and freedom when looking to the future. “The journey is an arduous one requiring both an openness to the mysterious in living and a faith, even in the seeming hopelessness, that things can change” (Bauer et al., 1992, p.153).

The authors divide their findings into two categories, that of forgiveness as issue and movement toward healing.

Forgiveness as issue. Self-forgiveness is a process that is pervasive and ongoing. It begins when an individual is unable to continue avoiding or denying the increasing awareness that something is fundamentally wrong with them or their life. This may happen as a result of a crisis situation or catastrophic event.

An alternative path of self-forgiveness is one that is not as crisis oriented, but one that follows a procession of difficult and profound changes over time. These changes may seem ordinary to the outsider but are felt deeply by the individual experiencing them. According to Bauer et al. (1992), it is often only later that an individual can identify the turning point, a particular point in time during their life, which started them on the road to self-forgiveness. As the realization grows over time, the individual experiences a sense of brokenness, a separation from self and others that is profoundly painful. This sense of being disconnected often occurs within the context of replaying the situation over in one's mind and is accompanied by feelings of self-recrimination, confusion, guilt, anxiety and despair. "One's faults and fallibilities can no longer be denied or contained. One feels agonizingly vulnerable, naked before self and others" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 154).

The closer one gets to realizing the extent to which one has hurt self or others, the greater the intensity of feeling "bad" or "wrong". This often leads to preoccupation with the very wrongness of the offending event. There is great fear that one's weakness will be uncovered and desperation in regards to personally fixing the situation.

There is a struggle in the midst of a deep sense of remorse. Emptiness, sadness, and intense loneliness may emerge, alternating with cynicism and anger. Self-recrimination often takes the form of 'beating oneself up'. At this point one is not sure whether things will ever change and one fears becoming stuck: never recovering from devastation, never moving into healing, but remaining bitter and cynical (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 155).

Movement toward healing. The authors describe the movement of self-forgiveness in a number of different ways, as from estrangement to feeling at home, from darkness to light and from deception and denial to honesty and acknowledgement. They state that the movement is

not linear or necessarily smooth, but that it entails a significant amount of struggle and movement between acceptance and harsh judgement. At the same time there are parts of it that can be identified and described.

One key element according to the authors is the experience of some type of loving acceptance from others at this time, particularly towards those parts of ourselves that we find disagreeable: such as our anger, hatred, ignorance, inadequacy, mistakes, hurtfulness, alienation and irresponsibility. These supportive relationships are found with various people such as priests, therapists, pastors, family members or friends. In fact, Bauer et al. (1992) go so far as to say that “. . . it may not be too strong a statement to say that ‘self’-forgiveness always takes place in the context of some variation of loving relationships with others” (p. 155). What is central to this acceptance is being supportive without being intrusive, while respecting and accepting the person’s disturbing feelings.

Another aspect of the self-forgiveness process identified by Bauer et al. (1992) was that the self-forgiving individual had a faith or determination that experiencing the pain of one’s brokenness would lead to a better psychological place, that is, to healing. This faith enables one to “hang in there” at times when there seems to be little hope for change. One of the experiences that continued to emerge at different times for the study participants, as they described the self-forgiveness process was moments of “grace” coming as an unexpected gift, as if out of nowhere. It seemed that it was faith that allowed participants to be open to these moments and yet they were experienced as not being of the participant’s own making but as coming to them. One of the study participants described it as follows:

It had been raining that day, there was a beautiful rainbow that stretched from one side of the valley to the other. So I just pulled up on the rest area up on top of the hill there and

just parked the car and just took it all in. It was as though that was God's covenant with me that yes, all the struggles we've gone through are OK and you're going to make it. . . (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 157).

In the midst of this openness there is a sense of letting go—of one's old identity, expectations and particularly of one's belief that self-healing is possible. This sense was often combined with the sense that "life is too short" to hold on to grudges and to continue self-punishment. The act of letting go was not, the authors state, an intellectual, conscious act engaged in at will. A study participant explained it thusly: "People think that they've forgiven themselves or somebody else when they've just figured out or they've understood why they did what they did, but that's not forgiveness. Understanding is in the head and forgiveness is a surrender of the heart" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 157).

An additional aspect of the self-forgiveness process identified by participants was the experience of grief that accompanied the process of letting go. This grief was for what might have been and also for regretting what was. As one study participant stated: "Not feeling sorry *for* yourself, in that self-depreciating mode, but feeling sorry *towards* yourself, really kind of giving up to yourself that open, like, 'I'm sorry' and allowing yourself to be sorry and to forgive yourself . . . then you can move on" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 158).

A shift also occurs away from a primarily denying or blaming stance towards oneself to a new awareness of personal responsibility. The shift is one from seeing the problem residing in someone other than oneself, to recognizing and acknowledging one's participation in the event. This is a move away from perceiving oneself as the victim. This acceptance of responsibility releases one to move into a more accepting non-judgmental relationship with oneself.

At some point there is the realization that forgiveness has taken place. That internal piece of the person that had been previously denied, or that the person had tried to change is now accepted as part of who the person is. "This acceptance leads to a new relationship with oneself which has the quality of 'being at home,' a sense of ease about oneself and about one's place in the world" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 158). The change is not instantaneous, but rather gradual and subtle. A growing sense of ease about one's identity occurs, along with a lessening of self-blame and anguish in regards to one's relationship to the world. Focus at this point shifts to a meta-perspective, with an accompanying ability to more easily embrace all aspects of one's self. The shift is away from defining one's self as solely "bad " or "wrong" to a more balanced view. Not that one never feels wrong or bad but that these feelings are not pervasive in one's life.

This quality of "at-homeness" is at the core an accepting of one's humanness, which was often described as a kind of integration or reclaiming by the participants in the Bauer et al. (1992) study. This reintegration leads to a growing realization that one's dark side is less threatening. "One feels ordinary, neither saint nor devil. One becomes more honest with oneself, and in doing so, also judges others and oneself less harshly" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 159). This integration also involves the cognizance of one's connection with others and the world. Externally, life goes on as it did before, but internally there is a deepened, more intimate sense of involvement. Study participants often used words such as "belonging " and "reconciliation" in describing this forgiving of themselves. There was a sense of no longer having to betray their true selves, their darker side, in order to feel comfortable or in community with others.

With restored trust and acceptance of one's place in the world one becomes more fully connected to and a part of day-to-day life. The analysis of life decreases while spontaneous and free participation increase. At the same time one's own separateness is experienced, but not in a

negative way. It is a deepened sense of individuality that is experienced, arising from self-care, the affirmation of claiming boundaries and holding one's own. "This at-homeness is accompanied by peace of mind, a sense of unity, a feeling that life is fundamentally right and needs no correction" (Bauer et al., 1992, p. 159).

Clinical Literature

Safer (1999), a psychotherapist in private practice describes self-forgiveness in the following way: "... it is the only essential act of forgiveness, because it involves coming to terms with the one person you can never get away from; you can cut off your mother, reject your lover, or repudiate your friend, but there is no escaping yourself for the rest of your life" (p. 120). She states that the three characteristics of other-forgiveness, re-engaging, recognizing, and reinterpreting are involved here along with three additional ones.

The first is taking responsibility. Here one admits guilt and assigns fault to oneself for harm done to self and others. The second is grieving for losses you have caused, and the third is hating yourself less as a result. "Any act of fully realized forgiveness must include self forgiveness, because every betrayal provokes vengefulness and hatred in the betrayed, and everybody feels secretly guilty for harboring these unacceptable emotions" (p.121). According to Safer self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness do not happen in any particular order. They may actually happen concurrently, in an incremental fashion.

Flanigan's (1992) work on other-forgiveness led her to look at the concept of self-forgiveness. She gathered information from some of the respondents of her first study on other-forgiveness, from colleagues who distributed materials for her study on other-forgiveness, and from participants in her other-forgiveness workshops. The author makes no claim that the

research is scientific in any way but her findings and extrapolations are at the same time enlightening.

Flanigan (1996) posits that self-forgiveness may actually be at the core of peacemaking.

She states that:

when people forgive others, they stop hatred in its track and refuse to allow it to pour onto others. When people forgive themselves, they also stop hatred in its track and refuse to allow self-loathing to dominate their lives and to spill over onto their children, spouses, friends, and neighbors. A person's self-loathing can be every bit as lethal to others as hatred in any other form. Hatred poisons, no matter to whom it is directed (Flanigan, 1996, p. viii).

Flanigan (1996) outlines five conditions in which self-forgiveness is necessary. They are as follows:

Causing injuries that result from mistakes, transgressions, or limitations. Mistakes are defined as harmful, rash, impulsive or foolish acts (Landman, 1993), or a wrong action or statement proceeding from faulty judgment, inadequate knowledge, or inattention (Merriam-Webster, 2000). Mistakes are seen to be made through action, inaction, omission or commission. A mistake is morally neutral. It is the end result of a mistake that takes on moral properties and becomes difficult to forgive when injury is caused. "Mistakes are errors; mistakes that require forgiveness are errors that result in harm or do not produce good when good was possible" (Flanigan, 1996, p. xiii)

Transgressions are actions that surpass certain boundaries. They differ from mistakes in that they are not morally neutral. It is wrong regardless of whether it is detected by another

person or not. Transgressions can cross a variety of boundaries including legal and moral, and can also have evil intent at their core.

Flanigan (1996) cites a dictionary definition of limitations and shortcomings as “a restrictive weakness or lack of capacity” “the condition or fact of failing to reach an expected or required standard or character or performance” respectively (Webster’s New International Dictionary 3rd Edition, cited in Flanigan, 1996, p. xvii). Both concepts are seen to relate to acquired or innate personal characteristics and may be physical or mental in nature. Mistakes may result from shortcomings or limitations, but like all mistakes they are morally neutral. Shortcomings that have been acquired may cause more personal discomfort, as they are more readily recognizable and modifiable. If limitations are hidden deep in the psyche and are only recognized when the injury of others occurs, the resultant pain may consume the person until the process of self-forgiveness begins.

Causing harm that challenges or alters our personal sets of assumptions. When a person damages a relationship to the degree that forgiveness is difficult, what may become evident is that one or more of the person’s central assumptions need to be looked at and possibly changed. Flanigan (1996) suggests that people have six essential assumptions about their lives. These include 1) the world is benevolent, 2) the world is meaningful, 3) the self is worthy, 4) the world is to some degree predictable, 5) people have some control over matters in their personal lives, and 6) a principle of justice is at work in the world. Flanigan (1996) posits that these assumptions can be shattered by natural disasters, other human beings, crime and war, and by oneself when others have been injured as a result of one’s action or inaction.

The trauma of being unable to forgive ourselves is brought on by our own mistakes, wrongdoings, and personal limitations. Like other traumas, they permanently damage

our bedrock assumptions that we are inherently good or that our world is orderly. When we ruin our own relationships, we assault the assumption that the world is benevolent. When a person cannot forgive herself, it is precisely for the damage she has done to her own world-view (Flanigan, 1996, p. xix).

When apologies from others do not seem to correct the situation. An apology is the beginning of a process of interpersonal forgiveness that is complete when the injured party accepts the offending party back into relationship. Those who have difficulty forgiving themselves likely have had one of three experiences with an apology according to Flanigan (1996). They may have apologized, but the apology was not accepted, they apologized and the apology was accepted but the damage to their own self-worth was such that the accepted apology had no impact, or the injured person was no longer available to apologize to.

An apology starts the forgiveness process but it alone cannot effect full forgiveness. As a result of one's actions someone else's world has changed, one's own world has changed, and one's belief in oneself have changed. Apology alone does not repair relationships, reestablish old assumptions, or restore a sense of self-worth.

When an injurer is exposed to him or herself as feared. This is the case when individuals privately fear what they may actually be, for example evil or cruel at the core of their being. Flanigan (1996) suggests that there are many people who fear that beneath their successes and public and private selves there lies an essentially false person. These fears may be reinforced when people come face-to-face with their own limitations or shortcomings. People who become aware of these unfavorable characteristics have two choices. They can either ignore them or reconcile themselves to their weaknesses, the latter of which involves self-forgiveness.

One or more of the following four emotions are felt by the person who must forgive him or herself: guilt, shame, regret, or grief. Flanigan acknowledges the existence of a significant body of research for each of the above notions and, given the prospective audience of her book, chooses to provide simple distinctions. She defines guilt as a person's subjective experience of feeling bad for having transgressed. Being linked to doing something wrong, it is a moral notion.

Shame is defined as the subjective experience of feeling bad about oneself, but not for having transgressed. It is in the process of comparison between people that shame emerges, particularly when people feel they fall short in the comparison. Guilt is not a comparative notion.

Regret is defined as the subjective experience of feeling bad or sorry in regards to the differential outcomes of chosen versus unchosen alternatives. All three feelings can come to the surface when people experience a situation that they cannot seem to forgive. All three are connected directly to who people are and the alternatives they choose.

Flanigan (1996) defines grief as a person's subjective experience of feeling bad about a loss, such as the loss of a person, a relationship, or something nonmaterial such as a dream or belief. In the context of self-forgiveness grief is tied in some way to the grieving person's actions or characteristics. A person that loses a friend due to a bad personal decision not only regrets the decision but also grieves the loss of the friend.

These then are the conditions that require self-forgiveness according to Flanigan (1996). "A person who needs to forgive herself feels bad because she transgressed a moral rule, fell short of her expectation of herself, made bad decisions, or lost something dear. While any of these

feelings may be hard for a person to bear, they are also positive, because they prompt a person to attempt self-forgiveness” (Flanigan, 1996, p. xxiii).

Flanigan (1996) clarifies the self-forgiveness process further by distinguishing between real limitations and false limitations. It seems there are people who throughout their life believe one of their strengths or weaknesses has hurt someone else in a substantial way when this is far from the truth. People who continuously struggle to forgive need to know what it is about themselves that requires forgiveness. The distinction between false and real limitations is vital to this process. Flanigan supplies three points that describe the difference.

1. False limitations, unlike real ones, are defined by people other than those who have the “limitations.” By contrast, real limitations become apparent to a person who has hurt someone else because of those limitations.
2. False limitations are used to manipulate people. In particular, they are used by people who claim to be injured in an effort to manipulate the “injurer” to change a behavior or attitude in a way that would be advantageous to the “injured.”
3. False limitations are not necessarily obvious to people outside of a relationship. Other people who observe the relationship between a “flawed” person and one who claims to be injured cannot see any connection between the flaw and the injury (Flanigan, 1996, p.20).

Generally speaking, limitations that result in situations people find hard to forgive themselves for, are limitations in perceiving personal traits that may cause harm or failing to recognize competency limitations. The idea here is that people may know that they are weak, opinionated, stubborn, possessive, or jealous for example, but they have no idea how much negative impact these traits have until the damage has occurred. Some people have difficulty

recognizing their areas of incompetence while others have difficulty identifying the limits of their competence.

Flanigan (1996) also distinguishes between true and false transgressions. There are people who have negative feelings towards themselves because they believe they have done something wrong to someone. At times these people are clear on what it was they did, at other times they are not. These false transgressions can be as difficult to deal with as true transgressions. These people find themselves stymied as they attempt to forgive themselves because the need for forgiveness is false also. "Where there are false wrongdoings, there is nothing to be forgiven for and nothing to forgive oneself for" (Flanigan, 1996).

False transgressions are similar to false limitations in that they too are not obvious to outsiders as no wrongdoing has occurred. A further similarity to false limitations is that false transgressions are defined by only one person in the relationship, not both. Flanigan (1996) offers two additional points:

1. There may appear to be agreement between the two as to what is right and wrong, but the agreement on one person's part is not freely given.
2. There may be compliance to an accepted moral contract, but the compliance is a product of guilt, self-doubt, or fear rather than one of healthy agreement (Flanigan, 1996, p. 38).

In a true moral law between two people both voluntarily agree to abide by a particular principle. This allegiance is not coerced and both people have an equal hand in defining the principle. These interpersonal moral agreements continuously change over time as new situations and new information is encountered.

The concept of self-justification is also addressed in Flanigan's (1996) work. In this view, ". . . justifications attempt to place transgressions in some logical and meaningful context within

the moral agreement between the people involved” (Flanigan, 1996, p. 42). They take three forms in addition to the universal assertion that harm was not intended. They are:

1. A greater good will be the result from breaking the moral agreement. The wrongdoer truly believes that the betrayed person will also agree that the greater good was more important than their moral agreement.
2. Another moral agreement overrode the one between the wrongdoer and the person betrayed.
3. The relationship had never encountered an event that challenged its basic moral agreements. Having no time to discuss the impact such an action would have on the relationship, the wrongdoer simply acted. Sadly, this action damaged the relationship (Flanigan, 1996).

Some people use all four of the justifications and some use only one. Justifications are used in an attempt to convince the injured party that the behavior was morally acceptable. In contrast, excuses are an attempt to have the actions seen as wrong but without blame. The most common excuses are those that claim the person was in some way “not themselves” at the time. That is, the injury was caused by the person being temporarily disabled by being distraught, confused, ill, or under the influence of a mood altering substance.

When people attempt to forgive themselves the facades they have constructed in their private lives begin to crumble. This is a time when their self-delusion ends and an honest confrontation with the unacceptable and avoided parts of themselves begins. “This confrontation is not pleasurable, though, and requires a level of courage that many of us do not have” (Flanigan, 1996, p. 48).

Flanigan (1996) identifies four outcomes that result when people are able to forgive themselves. These people:

1. Have become familiar with the ‘enemy within’, and know how to keep it in check.

2. Have put away self-destructive emotional weapons such as guilt and shame.
3. Have made promises to themselves and intend to keep them.
4. Look to the future free of the bad feelings associated with the injuries they brought about and the fear that they might injure, in the same way, again. They describe themselves as 'clean,' 'free,' 'lighter,' and 'happy again.' (Flanigan, 1996).

Similar to her approach with other-forgiveness, Flanigan identifies four phases that people must pass through in order to forgive themselves. The phases are used as an organizing tool and are not meant to suggest timelines or inviolable sequential ordering of the process. The four phases of self-forgiveness are as follows:

Phase I: Confronting Yourself

Phase II: Holding Yourself Responsible

Phase III: Confessing Your Flaws

Phase IV: Transformation

Successfully working through each phase is key to freeing oneself from self-imposed captivity.

Concomitantly, one needs to have a strong belief that life ahead is worth the difficult work of self-forgiveness if one is to engage in the process to any successful degree. There are numerous ways of accomplishing the task of self-forgiveness. For some it is hard solitary work. For others professional therapy is a supportive process. There is no one correct way. "However it is accomplished, freedom lies at the end of the struggle" (Flanigan, 1996, p. 59). What follows is a description of the four phases of forgiveness.

Phase 1: Confronting yourself. As in all types of peacemaking it is a good idea to know and understand the enemy. When the enemy is known, it is easier to engage in negotiating a truce. The first phase, according to Flanigan (1996) is crucial in that it is impossible to forgive if

what is being forgiven is not truly understood. False identification can slow the process down immeasurably and can cause significant amounts of self-delusion, cover-up, and pain. The confrontation phase consists of five steps:

1. Naming any false limitation or wrongdoing one has labored under such that one can conclude whether self-forgiveness is actually needed.
2. Identifying the actual sources of the mistakes one has made.
3. Understanding the fundamental assumptions about oneself that have been damaged that one will need to repair.
4. Understanding and identifying one's feelings about the incident one cannot forgive
5. Identifying any barriers one might face when attempting to see one's own flaws and mistakes more realistically (Flanigan, 1996).

In seeking self-forgiveness people must look at themselves in a new way. This is a journey of self-discovery and self-understanding that needs a determined, thoughtful, and truthful seeker.

The first step emphasizes a thorough examination of the accuracy of one's assessment of person limitations and wrongdoing. At this juncture, according to Flanigan (1996) the individual seeking to forgive themselves needs to answer a series of questions. They are as follows:

1. Was I the first person to know that my limitation or wrongdoing hurt someone? If the people I hurt knew, did they use the experience against me to make me feel pain?
2. Have the people who said I hurt them or whom I actually hurt recounted this repeatedly, even if I am not sure that I did something wrong?
3. Has my guilt or shame increased over time, primarily because another person continues to condemn me and not because my self searching reveals things I do not like about myself?

4. Are the “victims” of my mistake profiting in any way at my expense? Are they receiving attention, or gaining power over me (Flanigan, 1996)?

This part of the self-forgiveness process is one of elimination. The four questions serve to clarify whether the person truly needs to self-forgive for the event she or he feels the need to be forgiven for or whether the person’s faults, limitations, and mistakes are being used by others for manipulative purposes. If the latter is true, there are alternative approaches that will better serve the individuals needs.

The second step consists of identifying the sources of mistakes one has made. Coming to truly know one’s limitations is a part of this process. This includes looking differently at how one has perceived personal limitations or moral duties in the past. Most people believe they know their limitations but tend to focus on falling short of some ideal. The other side of the coin needs to be included. This is the case where people exceed a particular virtue with the end result being a damaged relationship. “These kinds of limitations are more difficult to come to grips with and to accept as personal flaws because most people learn that honesty or loyalty, for example, are good at all times. We are not taught that honorable behavior can cause people great pain (Flanigan, 1996, p. 66).

Part of the confrontation process may include admitting when one is wrong. In this initial phase of self-forgiveness the specific wrong needs to be named along with the moral codes that were violated. A part of the forgiveness process is the reexamination of the broken moral code and committing to the resulting revised moral code for the future. It is crucial that honesty and humility provide the foundation for the self-forgiveness process. Without them the process is likely to break down or stall at some point, leaving the person to cycle back to start again.

The third step Flanigan (1996) outlines is to understand the fundamental assumptions about oneself that have been shattered and that will need repair. Core assumptions allow people to live their lives in a comfortable way. Flanigan (1996) suggests that people have six essential assumptions about their lives. These include 1) the world is benevolent, 2) the world is meaningful, 3) the self is worthy, 4) the world is to some degree predictable, 5) people have some control over matters in their personal lives, and 6) a principle of justice is at work in the world. When people go so far as to significantly injure someone they care about, one or more of the above assumptions are suddenly invalidated.

People who betray others may be shocked to find other people's limits in accepting their flaws. Not only the victim's assumptive worlds explode; the people who wound others also cannot bring their worlds back into order as a result. Injurers who care about the harm they have done have permanently damaged their own belief systems. To heal, they, like victims, will have to build new ones (Flanigan, 1996, p.74).

Central to the self-forgiveness process is the need to rebuild one's assumptive set. Following the successful conclusion of the process one will have built new beliefs about oneself, other people, and the world in general.

The forth step in the first phase is understanding one's feelings about the injurious incident. It is suggested in this approach that people at this stage in the self-forgiveness process will be struggling to decrease, if not distinguish the feelings that resulted from the injury they caused. What is important here is for the individual seeking forgiveness to work to clarify his or her feelings that resulted from the event. Part of the clarification process needs to address issues of false forgiveness, that is, is the individual seeking self-forgiveness when they have ultimately done nothing wrong. The feelings experienced will influence the particular course of self-

forgiveness. As such, people will need to be as specific as possible about the nature of their experience.

The fifth step in this phase is understanding the barriers one might face when confronting one's flaws or failures. Flanigan identifies a number of possible barriers to the self-forgiveness process. The first has to do with resistance from an uninvolved party. If someone other than the injured individual speaks against one's desires to self-forgive one will need to recognize that biases against forgiveness may be present, and the person seeking forgiveness will need to assess whether the biases are enough to prevent one from proceeding. "Barriers to self-forgiveness are surprisingly prevalent in our largely Judeo-Christian culture. If forgiveness is at the heart of Christianity, its advocates are mystifyingly silent. People who try to forgive themselves must try to hang on to the hope that forgiveness is a way to end hatred; and hatred in any form, even directed toward the self, can do no good" (Flanigan, 1996, p. 77).

A second barrier to self-forgiveness for some people is the enduring characteristic of blaming themselves for most of their failures. This may be due to low self-esteem issues or to an inflated sense of their influence over family members for example. If this is the case, it is suggested that professional help be engaged to address the underlying issue first.

A third possible barrier for some people may be the belief that God has turned against them or could not forgive them. It is suggested here that these people need to address their thoughts about their spiritual lives. A final barrier may be that self-hatred reduces the need to take responsibility. If this is the case, these people must realize that the self-forgiveness process demands the recognition and acceptance of a greater amount of responsibility. Self-forgiveness may free people from hatred, but not from responsibility.

Some of these barriers people will be able and willing to take on directly and alone. Others may need the help of friends or professionals. Unless barriers to the process are identified and addressed, going further will be difficult.

Phase II: Holding yourself responsible. The purpose of the second phase of self-forgiveness is to identify whom is responsible, and to what extent they are responsible for the situation in question. This phase serves to more actively engage a person seeking self-forgiveness in an exploration and confrontation of the pain-causing situation. Such exploration of the situation and one's personal involvement in it will serve to bring the accompanying emotions about the situation and oneself to the surface.

According to Flanigan (1996), self-forgiveness is a process involving revelation, surrender, maintenance, and rebuilding. It is not a process through which feelings are conquered, but rather, surrendered. "During Phase 2, it is best to remember: You cannot forgive yourself until you are convinced it is you who needs to be forgiven" (Flanigan, 1996, p. 93).

The amount of responsibility an individual is willing to accept is at the core of the self-forgiveness process. Flanigan outlines three steps to work through:

1. Identify complications that might make the assignment of responsibility difficult.
2. Learn a way to assign responsibility.
3. Uncover any secrets that may lie at the center of a person's inability to self-forgive (Flanigan, 1996).

During this phase people seeking self-forgiveness continue to look at themselves honestly, regardless of the limitations or mistakes that they see.

In identifying complications that might make assignment of responsibility difficult Flanigan (1996) identifies three complicating factors: models of assigning responsibility in one's

family of origin, religious orientation, and gender. In regard to family models of responsibility the author suggests that complications are due to locus of control issues. For example, some families see failure as an internal attribute of the person that failed. The members of this family will think that the person that failed should have tried harder or prepared better. When a person succeeds in this family they are congratulated as success is seen as an internal attribute.

Alternatively, a family may understand failure and success both as external attributes. Failure in this family is attributed to external causes and success is attributed to luck.

The way in which people learn to attribute success or failure can substantially impact the self-forgiveness process. Those who internalize failure when they had little control over the situation will look for self-forgiveness even when it is not warranted. Alternatively, there are those who seek forgiveness who have little understanding of their contribution to the negative life event. A careful analysis of one's family's attribution style will serve to clarify that which is making self-forgiveness difficult.

The second barrier has to do with religious teachings. Those people who have been raised in a home where religion is important will tend to be influenced by religious interpretations of the sources and causes of success and failure. Some religious interpretations understand all humans to be sinners and all failures due to sin. Other interpretations understand some people to be good and others bad, based on certain criteria. People with deeply held religious beliefs will need to sort out their views in order to assess the impact they are having on the self-forgiveness process.

The third and final barrier identified by Flanigan (1996) is that of gender. She suggests that women tend to attribute their failures internally because of family, religious, educational, historical influences. One result of these gender differences in attribution is that women

attempting to forgive themselves may have greater difficulties separating themselves from the situation. From this perspective, women may need to spend a little more time working through the injury with a focus on what portions they need to take responsibility for and what portions they are not responsible for. Understanding the dynamics of one's family and the attributional differences would help in this regard.

The second step in holding yourself responsible is learning a new way to assign responsibility. In the previous step Flanigan outlined ways to identify complicating factors that affect one's assignment of responsibility. In this step the focus is on specific questions about the situation that remains to be forgiven. It should be clear by this point in the process whether the injury resulted from a limitation or a transgression. The questions asked depend on the type of injury.

If the damage resulted from a limitation, for example if one fell short or exceeded a virtue, one would need to ask the following questions:

1. Was I aware of this limitation prior to the unforgiven events?
2. Did I know that this limitation could result in harm?
3. If I knew this limitation could result in harm, did I try to correct it or improve it?
4. Could the harm that occurred have taken place if my limitation was not present (Flanigan, 1996)?

Answering the above questions is important because they further reveal the degree to which the person is responsible.

Assigning responsibility is not an all or nothing process. It is done by degrees from least responsible to most responsible. Intentionality is very near the most responsible end of the spectrum and foreseeability follows close behind (Flanigan, 1996). Limitations do not result in

intentional acts but people have different levels of awareness about their limitations and the extent to which they may cause harm. This is where the above questions become important.

The questions one needs to ask are different if the injury was due to a transgression. The questions in such a case are as follows:

1. Have I broken moral rules more than a few times? Has wrongdoing become a way of life?
2. What did I value more than the law or rule I betrayed when I transgressed?
3. Was harm my intention when I transgressed (Flanigan, 1996)?

Answering these questions sincerely forces people seeking self-forgiveness to confront their habit of transgressing or inclination to breach morality to get what they want. It offers the opportunity to stop deceiving themselves about their values and to reassess them openly.

When people assess their personal level of culpability for the event in question they learn more about their desires and values. People also come to understand the habits they have developed that facilitate the transgressing behavior. "It is not pleasant to accept responsibility for cavalier hedonism, but if you are to forgive yourself, you must do just that and stop making excuses or blaming others (Flanigan, 1996, p. 108).

The third step in this phase is uncovering your secrets. This step, according to Flanigan is likely the most difficult to accomplish in the self-forgiveness process. At this point, the seeking individual needs to further examine his or her state of mind, unspoken thought processes and feelings around the time of the incident. Engaging in this step in a truthful way empowers the individual to make decisions.

If people attempting to forgive themselves go through the motions of forgiving themselves for bad judgement when they know the real intent was something more damaging, say, to destroy another person's career for example, they are acting out self-forgiveness, not

sincerely engaging in it. “People who cannot forgive themselves are usually humbled by their own shortcomings; but to accept one’s shortcomings or wrongdoings, self-deception must give way to bare and sometimes bitter truth” (Flanigan, 1996, p. 109). It is paramount that any secrets, if they exist, be identified and acknowledged.

Phase III: Confessing your flaws. In this phase the focus shifts away from internal analysis to communicating with another person. Flanigan (1996) distinguishes between confession and admission in that when people admit something, they need only admit it to themselves. Confession, on the other hand, necessitates talking with another person. In this phase the two go together. Admissions serve to reveal the truth and confessions manifest these truths to others. The underlying assumption here is that “. . . it is difficult to forgive yourself until you tell another person the harm you have done” (Flanigan, 1996, p. 121).

As in the other phases there are a number of steps involved in this phase. They are as follows:

1. Recognize any previous experiences you may have had with confessing that may make it difficult to do again.
2. Select the right person or agent to whom you will confess.
3. Confess.

Each step brings people closer to what Flanigan refers to as what might be the most humbling experience a person can undergo (1996, p.121), that is, the confession.

The first step entails looking back at one’s past experience with confession. Flanigan outlines a number of experiences of confession that likely would have a negative effect on people’s ability to embrace the act truthfully and sincerely. She differentiates between

confession and reporting, the former being prompted by guilt, shame, remorse, and a deep desire to change, and the latter by a desire to be relieved of the burden of guilt and self-loathing.

A second possible barrier to confession may be people's experience of religion. There are people who carry significant resentment from their youth when they felt they were forced to come up with things to confess to a priest in order to learn the observance of confession. In this case, it may be that confession becomes a habit bereft of real feelings, leading to resentment of its insincere and non-voluntary nature. People who have experienced confession in this way will need to remind themselves that regardless of the form it takes and to whom it is directed, the process must be real and from the heart.

A third possible barrier identified is confessions that have been poorly received. People who have experienced this type of barrier have generally experienced punishment as the result of confession. A typical result for these people is that they do not confess to anyone. For these people to forgive themselves, according to Flanigan, they need to choose a confessor very carefully.

A fourth possible barrier is the act of confessing for false relief. This is a possibility for people who feel negatively about themselves. Flanigan (1996) provides the example of a school-aged girl who generally felt bad about herself, who confessed to incidents that she did not commit in order to get relief from her low sense of self worth. For some this may become a habit. When self-forgiveness is the goal, people will need to differentiate between what to confess for and what it is they feel so badly about.

The final barrier Flanigan cites has to do with so called "confessions" on television. These confessions serve only to entertain. Ultimately, they degrade the profound purpose of

confessing, that is, to disclose a portion of the private realm of one's life such that a person can essentially change the way he or she has been living.

Contestants of TV shows do not confess so they can change their lives. Rather, they are there to answer the urge to bare personal secrets in order to mystify and tantalize, or to cause harm. Confessions of this sort “. . . are merely reports of an activity that the ‘reporter’ may have done, and have no objective other than to disclose the activity to someone else” (Flanigan, 1996, p. 126).

Barriers to the confession process need to be identified and their potential impact assessed in order for the self-forgiveness process to be successful. Once the barriers are known and understood, the possibility of their removal is magnified. It is then that sharing in truth and sincerity can take place.

The second step in confessing your flaws is selecting the right person to whom you will confess. People tend to confess when the burden of the secrets they carry outweigh their fear of disclosing them (Flanigan, 1996). At that point they need to choose someone to whom they will confess. This could be an acquaintance, a relative, a friend, or someone in the helping professions.

Helpful receivers' responses can take a number of forms according to Bok (1982). These include words of encouragement, reparation ideas, purification ritual plans, penance requirements, or simple non-judgement. The source of a person's injury (i.e., limitation, wrongdoing, or mistake) may indicate the appropriate type of response. People who are ready to confess are prepared to set out on fundamental personal change. The person hearing the confession then, needs to be willing and able to facilitate that change. It is key that the

confessant “look for someone who can share one’s burdens, interpret one’s revelations, and show the path to release” (Bok, 1982, p. 76).

Flanigan (1996) poses three considerations for people selecting someone to confess to. They are faithfulness, the content of one’s confession, and expectations. Faithfulness refers to the special bond between the person confessing and the person hearing the confession.

According to Flanigan (1996) the confessant must have faith that:

1. The listener will keep what is confessed confidential.
2. The listener will not use the secret to gain any personal advantage.
3. The listener will not condemn.
4. The listener will have a comforting response and possibly provide ideas about what to do next.

What is important is that the person seeking self-forgiveness make the choice only after due consideration. If it is more difficult to continue to live with the secret than to live with the consequences of confessing, then one should carefully go ahead.

The content of one’s confession refers to what it is a person wants to communicate when a listener has been identified. What will be communicated is a wrongdoing, a limitation, or a mistake that has damaged someone or a relationship with someone. The choice of a listener depends to a degree on the content of the confession. According to Bok (1982), in general terms, if the content is for the most part due to a mistake or limitation, the confessing person should choose someone who is not likely to condemn and who is able to provide direction in regard to overcoming flaws and their accompanying defenses. In contrast, if the content of the confession is due to a wrongdoing the confessing person should seek out a listener who can offer penance or purification.

The third consideration for people choosing a person to confess to is their expectations. They need to consider what end result they want and how likely it is they will get it. According to Flanigan (1996) there are primarily three things people seeking self-forgiveness want: to share their burden, to face no condemnation, and to open the door to personal change. Some may also erroneously expect that the confession will serve to erase their guilt. "Confessions may open the door to re-creating the self and ultimately reducing the guilt; but in all probability, bad feelings in general (regret, shame, and so on) will remain firmly in place for some time to come" (Flanigan, 1996, p. 135).

Finally some people will consider confessing directly to the person they hurt. Flanigan here distinguishes between confession and apology. The former is understood to reveal a secret while the latter sets off a dialogue between the injurer and the injured party. Confessions allow for the possibility of apologies, and as such may be followed by apology, but they are not apologies themselves. Confessions open the door to transformation, they in themselves do not transform people (Flanigan, 1996).

When any possible barriers have been identified and assessed, and when a listener has been chosen, the next step is to confess. A confession can be spoken, written, planned, or spontaneous. Writing out one's confession, whether to pass on to the listener or to use as a reference has some advantages. First, it provides the opportunity for people wishing to confess to relive and review their injurious experience so that it seems more real. A written confession also provides time such that the experience of the injury can become more consistent. Finally, for those who lack the fortitude for a face-to-face confession, a written confession offers an alternative medium for self-exposure.

On caution must be noted. People who use written confessions must remember that they cannot be completely sure where the written materials will end up and who will see them. For example, if the written confession is shared with a therapist, the document may stay on file for years to come, and can be subpoenaed by court at any time if a situation warrants such an action. It is safest to assume that a written confession may be read by others at some time. "People may want to write their confessions out so that they can come to accept themselves; but they probably should destroy the written confession and simply confess verbally" (Flanigan, 1996, p.139).

When a time, place, and person are chosen it may be wise to let the listener know that one is going to reveal something important. In this way, if the listener is a professional, the opportunity is there to discuss the limits to confidentiality that he or she adheres to. When confessing, people should work to do so in a complete way. The support and comfort received from the listener may very well seem false and hollow if only a partial confession is offered.

A confession removes false pride that prevents people from coming to understand not only that other human beings can be ugly, but that they themselves can be also. A confession is one of life's most profound experiences. One person shows evidence to another of how base and ugly the human species can be, and the other answers in love.

A confession is a moment that expresses complete humanness—human vulgarity confronting human compassion. In this sense, the opportunity to confess is the invitation of a lifetime, an invitation to see, firsthand, the full spectrum of what we are capable of, the capacity hurt and the capacity to love. Choose the one to whom you confess wisely (Flanigan, 1996, p. 140).

Phase IV: Transformation. The final phase in the self-forgiveness process has to do with fundamental and essential personal change. It is a process of personal re-creation. It is similar in

form to the transformation people go through when they have been injured by others mentioned in an earlier section. People who come to the point where they are finally able to forgive themselves change from:

1. People who struggle to admit their mistakes, limitations, or wrongdoings to people who have gained insight into their flaws to people who understand that everyone is flawed.
2. People who dislike or feel guilty about themselves to people who regret what happened to people who use what happened to set a new course for their life.
3. People who may not aware of their flaws to people who can admit them to themselves to people who can confess them to others.
4. People who are not fully aware to their connectedness to others or spirituality, to people who are disconnected from others or spirituality, to people who are again connected to one or both (Flanigan, 1996).

Transformation requires a significant amount of effort and a continual concentrated confrontation with that which is true. Central to this phase is the knowledge that people cannot forgive themselves until they commit themselves to personal change.

People differ in what parts of their self are transformed. Some go through a complete transformation—changing their beliefs, how they live, who they associate with,, and how they work and play. Others change parts of themselves—their emotional lives, or life goals, or their way of dealing with people for example. Flanigan (1996) identifies three general pathways to transformation. They are:

1. Using coping strategies.
2. Transforming one's basic life assumptions.

3. Engaging in purification rituals that reconnect people with other people and spiritual activities.

No one pathway is better than the others. People differ in the pathway or pathways they choose. Some take all three while others will choose only one or two.

People generally use coping strategies, the first pathway, to reduce high levels of stress. Flanigan (1996) lists the following five strategies: social comparison, assessing benefits, emotional-focused, appraisal-focused, and problem-focused. Social comparison may be used when people feel badly about themselves. They may make downward comparisons whereby they compare their own situation with someone less fortunate than themselves. In so doing they may feel better about themselves and more at ease with their situation (Janoff-Bulman, 1992).

People who use benefit analysis seek to identify a “greater good” that resulted from their injurious experience (Frankl, 1967). The benefit these people identify may be lessons learned, new acquaintances, difficulties they no longer have, or even the ability to engage in activities that were previously too difficult to even try. The benefit analysis serves to lead some people to reframe their experience as their greatest personal asset, resolving to help others avoid the same mistakes or helping others not to be so hard on themselves (Frankl, 1963).

According to Flanigan (1996), people who use appraisal-focused coping strategies may attempt to redefine the situation as a challenge or an opportunity rather than continuing to experience it as a threat. Further, people who use the emotion-focused strategy may attempt to decrease or contain negative thinking patterns arising from the injurious experience. This may not be particularly useful for those attempting to forgive themselves as self-forgiveness “depends on the ability and willingness to call up and to experience the emotional aspects . . . as fully as

possible” (Landman, 1993, p.212). Suppressing emotions will slow down, if not halt the forgiveness process and injure people further over time.

A problem-focused coping strategy is likely to be more affective than either the emotion-focused or the appraisal-focused strategies. The problem-solver methodically works through a number of steps in an effort to move forward. The steps include defining the problem, generating solutions, assessing alternatives for effectiveness, and acting on the chosen solution. Flanigan (1996) identifies two common strategies that arise from the problem-solving focus. They are apologies and restitution.

A confession allows others to see one’s flaws, whereas an apology shows those flaws to someone who already knows of them. The point of doing so is to place one’s flaws in another’s hands to be accepted or rejected.

An apology transfers power. A person who has withheld an apology has never given the listener a chance to reject him. A person who apologizes hands over the future of the relationship to another . . . The unspoken apology holds a petty kind of power. It prevents criticism, anger, or demands for promises. It protects against rejection. In the spirit of forgiving, though, which requires an unwavering commitment to truth, an apology is the only real means of opening up the potential of reconnecting with the person one has wounded (Flanigan, 1996, p. 155).

It might seem strange that apology can be used to complete the self-forgiveness process. Ultimately, interior probing, interrogation, anguish, and finally understanding are not necessarily enough for self-forgiveness to take place. For some people, it is the verbalization that is important. As Tavuchis (1991) points out: “until these inchoate feelings and ruminations surface, purged of all traces of self-pity and, most important, articulated in the presence of the offended

other [or surrogate other in some instances], they serve only as soliloquies with little or no consequence or meaning” (p.121).

Like apology, restitution can serve to humble offenders and reconnect them with humanity. When the loss is severe it is difficult to see how restitution can be made. In less severe cases though, it may remain a possibility either in actual or symbolic form. All communities have opportunities for people wanting to make symbolic restitution. Drunk drivers who kill can share their insight and warn others about the dangers of drinking and driving. A person who contracts lung cancer from many years of smoking can speak to school children about the dangers of smoking. Chronic criminals can work to dispel romantic myths about criminal life and prison with young first time offenders. For some people, total self-forgiveness is possible when this restitution is complete.

The second type of transformation Flanigan (1996) proposes is transformed assumptions. This is the most complete form of personal change and goes beyond coping strategies. This type of transformation occurs when people’s base or bedrock assumptions are damaged as a result of an injury to the extent that they must be rebuilt from the bottom up. This type of transformation can include rethinking the nature of human kind and how individuals fit in, questioning what the essence of the world is and how life can be lived meaningfully. Some of the basic assumptions most people have are that they are worthy, the world is benevolent, the world has meaning, justice exists, and that they have some control over their lives (Flanigan, 1996). As a result of the injury people tend to believe they are not worthy, and that they have lost the little control they assumed they had over different aspects of their lives.

As individuals people tend to use denial, delusions, and defenses to cover up the darker side of humanity in themselves. They see it in the media but deny, rationalize, intellectualize, or

repress the idea that it exists in all human beings. People who cannot forgive themselves, says Flanigan (1996) are people whose defenses have given way to their true nature. They have clearly seen their own humanity and as a result their unenlightened assumptions about themselves no longer hold. They are in a position in which they have to rebuild their base assumptions about who they truly are, namely, flawed humans in a flawed world.

One advantage for those who find themselves in the above situation is that they have the opportunity, as they release their delusions of uniqueness, to freely join others that are similar to them. “. . . They are free to struggle to be the best they can be. But they know that they are no better, no worse, than any other human. To be a good human is a choice, not a character trait (Flanigan, 1996, p. 165).

The third method for reentry into the human endeavor, purification rites, can serve to reconnect relationships between people and between people and their chosen spiritual entities. For example, Christians who believe that an injury they perpetrated has severed them from their community and their God can look for purification through rites such as repentance, confession, or baptism. The Sikh tradition has a ceremony called Amrit, and Judaism has Yom Kippur.

Some purification processes serve to purge while others are symbolic of reconnecting with community and the spiritual realm. Purification rituals that nurture forgiveness of self or others must at their core build connections between people. Being cleansed is not enough. “The person who forgives himself must do both: He must feel clean and connected once again—to others, to God, or to both (Flanigan, 1996, p. 169)”.

Conclusion

It is evident in this review that the processes of other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness as described in the empirical and clinical literature have much in common. An integration of these forgiveness processes would provide a good foundational understanding of what is involved.

These processes also seem well suited for integration into the interpersonal conflict literature. They are processes that can be engaged in to leave the pain, hurt, and investment of time and energy behind, to let go and move on. Other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness may very well be the tools people need to dig themselves out of the interpersonal conflict situations they find themselves stuck in.

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